



# Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Friday, February 28, 2014



## Seeing Green

### Boston, NYC Mayors to Skip St. Patrick's Parades

In this March, 2013 photo, holding flags in memory of the 343 firefighters who lost their lives in the Sept. 11 attacks, members of the New York City Fire Department walk up New York's Fifth Avenue as they take part in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Since the 1990s, the event's ban on gay signs and banners has spurred protests and litigation and led to the creation of an alternative, gay-friendly St. Patrick's Day parade in Queens.

(AP Photo/Tina Fineberg)

**DENISE LAVOIE**  
Associated Press  
BOSTON (AP) — Boston Mayor Martin Walsh, the son of Irish immigrants, is threatening to boycott the St. Patrick's Day parade unless organizers allow a group of gay military veterans to march, joining New York's mayor de Blasio in protesting parade policies on gay groups.

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### FED MONITORING RECENT WEAKER ECONOMIC DATA

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### OPPOSITION SEES PROBLEMS AHEAD FOR VENEZUELA

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# US Attorney General is hospitalized

**MATT APUZZO**

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**WASHINGTON** - Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. was briefly hospitalized Thursday after experiencing faintness and shortness of breath during a meeting with staff members, the Justice Department said.

In a brief statement to reporters, the department said the hospitalization was precautionary. He was released in the early afternoon and was resting at home.

Holder was taken to Med-Star Washington Hospital Center. He made jokes with paramedics in the ambu-

lance ride to the hospital. Holder, 63, has served as attorney general since President Barack Obama took office in 2009. He is expected to step down at some point this year.

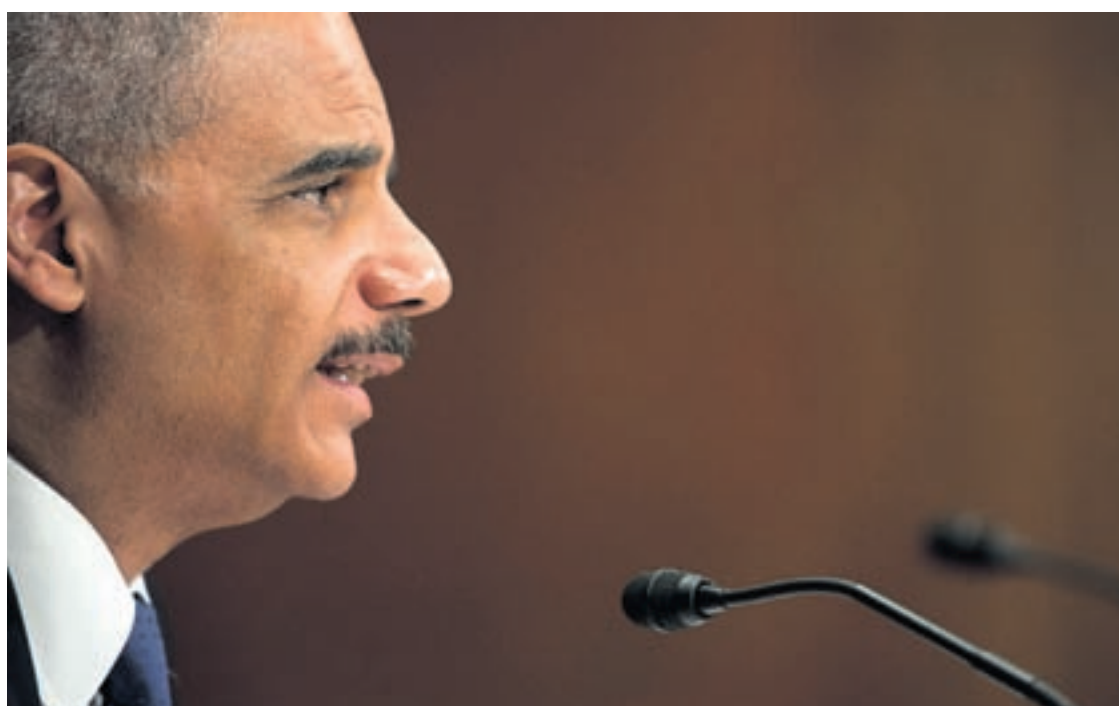
In a legal career that has spanned five decades, Holder has served as a corruption prosecutor, judge, U.S. attorney, and both of the top two jobs at the Justice Department. Holder has been the Obama administration's leading voice on civil rights issues, most notably the administration's campaigns for gay rights and against laws requiring voters to show iden-

tification at the polls. Studies show minorities and the poor are disproportionately affected by such laws.

Holder is active and generally in good health. He walks five flights of stairs to his office each morning and was supposed to play basketball this weekend.

Holder is married to Sharon Malone, an obstetrician. They have three children.

A Justice Department spokesman, Brian Fallon, said that the department was functioning normally and that Holder had reviewed a statement on his own health before it was released.



Attorney General Eric Holder appears before a Senate Committee in Washington. Holder was hospitalized Feb. 27, 2014 after experiencing faintness and shortness of breath during a meeting with staff members, the Justice Department said, and in a brief statement to reporters, the department said the hospitalization was precautionary.

(Stephen Crowley/The New York Times)

**Kerry:**

## Russia pledges to respect Ukraine borders

**LARA JAKES**

**MATTHEW LEE**

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Russia has told the United States that it will respect the sovereignty of Ukraine and that military exercises near the Russian-Ukraine border are not a prelude to an intervention, Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday.

Russia scrambled fighter jets to patrol its border and reportedly gave shelter to Ukraine's fugitive president. But Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov assured Kerry the buildup was scheduled

previously and was unrelated to the recent unrest in Ukraine. The military movements had unnerved the U.S. because they followed the overthrow of Ukraine's pro-Russia President Viktor Yanukovich, who has fled Kiev, the capital, and reportedly is seeking refuge outside Moscow.

Kerry warned Russia this week against a military intervention the former Soviet republic and said it could face a strong response from the West, though he did not specify what that might be.

"We will look to Russia for

the choices that it makes in the next days for their confirmation of these statements," Kerry said at a State Department news conference with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier. "Words are words. We have all learned that it's actions and the follow-on choices that make the greatest difference." Kerry predicted that the military exercise will not be "so prolonged that it is going to have an impact on events there."

"Everybody needs to step back and avoid provocations," Kerry said.

## AROUND THE CARIBBEAN

### Haitians rally to mark Aristide ouster

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)** — Supporters of two-time President Jean-Bertrand Aristide are rallying in the Haitian capital to mark the 10th anniversary of his second ouster. The largely male crowd reached about 2,000 Thursday as it passed through the shanties in Port-au-Prince where the former leader still enjoys a following. The protesters denounced what they described as widespread corruption in the government of President Michel Martelly. Aristide was ousted on Feb. 29, 2004, and spent time in exile in South Africa until 2011, when he returned to Haiti.

### Four facing health care fraud charges

**SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)** — Four people including the owners of two pharmacies have been arrested on federal health care fraud charges in Puerto Rico. U.S. Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodriguez says the suspects are accused of submitting at least 554 false claims to Medicare totaling more than \$300,000. She said Thursday that they obtained the majority of the money back through reimbursements in a scheme that began in January 2010 and lasted for nearly two years thereafter. The suspects face a total of 14 charges.

### China gets visa-free travel to Jamaica

**KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)** — Jamaica will allow visa-free travel for vacationers from China as the island tries to develop new markets for its tourism industry. Tourism Minister Wykeham McNeill said this week that Chinese tourists will soon be able to travel to Jamaica for 30 days without a visa. The rule will take effect in a few weeks. For now, the number of Chinese travelers is small. Last year, Jamaica attracted 2,430 Chinese tourists, an increase of 15 percent over 2012. Jamaica has relaxed visa requirements for nationals of Colombia, Venezuela, and Russia.

### 172 migrants detained near Bahamas

**NASSAU, Bahamas (AP)** — Authorities in the Bahamas have detained 172 migrants aboard an overloaded boat near the capital of Nassau. The Royal Bahamas Defense Force says nearly all the migrants are Haitian, though two are from the Dominican Republic. The migrants were intercepted just a couple of miles from Paradise Island, home to the Atlantis resort. Sub Lt. Alexis Brown said this week that it is the largest number of migrants authorities have encountered trying to enter the Bahamas in recent years. He said they are all in good condition.

### Guyana to investigate activist's death

**GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP)** — The South American country of Guyana has ordered an in-depth investigation into the 1980 assassination of Walter Rodney, a local historian and black activist who was involved in the Black Power movement in the U.S. and the Caribbean. The Working People's Alliance, a Guyanese political party that Rodney founded in the 1970s, said this week that it hopes a commission composed of three Caribbean attorneys will identify all those responsible for Rodney's death. Rodney was killed in a June 1980 car bomb explosion in Guyana's capital.



# Arizona governor Brewer vetoes bill on gays, religion

BOB CHRISTIE

Associated Press

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Arizona's governor vetoed a bill pushed by social conservatives that would have allowed people with sincerely held religious beliefs to refuse to serve gays, ending a proposal that put America's deep polarization over homosexuality on stark display.

Slapping down her party's right wing, Gov. Jan Brewer, vetoed the bill after companies including Apple Inc. and American Airlines and more moderate Republicans including Sen. John McCain had urged warned it would hurt the state and could alienate businesses looking to expand there.

Loud cheers erupted outside the Capitol building immediately after Brewer made her announcement Wednesday.

The governor said the bill "could divide Arizona in ways we could not even

imagine and no one would ever want." The bill was broadly worded and could result in unintended negative consequences, she added.

The bill would have allowed people to claim their religious beliefs as a defense against claims of discrimination. Democrats said the bill could allow people to break nearly any law and cite religious freedom as a defense.

The governor's office said it had received more than 40,000 calls and emails on the legislation, with most of them urging a veto.

Similar bills are making their way through several state legislatures. Some are intended to protect gay-marriage bans, others to protect individuals or businesses who, for religious reasons, don't want to serve same-sex couples. In another closely watched case Wednesday, a federal judge declared Texas' ban on gay marriage un-

constitutional, but he left it in place until an appeals court can rule on the case. Similar rulings have been made in Utah, Oklahoma

gay marriage in the U.S.

"This ruling is the poster child of the culture war occurring in America today," said Todd Staples, a can-

marriage. Polls show the legal decisions come amid growing public support for gay marriage in the U.S. At least 17 states, mostly in the



Arizona Republican Gov. Jan Brewer, right, speaks at a news conference announcing she has vetoed SB1062, a bill designed to give added protection from lawsuits to people who assert their religious beliefs in refusing service to gays, at the Arizona Capitol on Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014, in Phoenix. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

and Virginia.

Conservatives are wrestling with how to respond to the growing legality of

didate for Texas lieutenant governor who drafted the state's constitutional amendment banning gay

Northeast, and the Washington capital district now allow marriage of same-sex couples. □

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# October trial date set in Colorado movie attack

**DONNA BRYSON**  
**Associated Press**

**CENTENNIAL, Colorado (AP)** — The man charged in the mass shooting at a Colorado movie theater in 2012 now faces trial in October.

However, Judge Carlos A. Samour added as he set the date Thursday that it's possible the trial may be further delayed as prosecutors and defense attorneys spar over sanity evaluations of James Holmes.

"As much as I know people are eager to have this trial take place ... I also want to make sure we're doing things right," Samour told lawyers at a court hearing, noting that, among other factors, a mental health expert may ask for more time to examine Holmes. "We're

all going to have to be flexible."

Samour said the trial would start Oct. 14 with the opening of a lengthy jury selection process. Samour said 6,000 potential jurors will be summoned, and those who respond will be interviewed by lawyers at a rate of 300 a day for at least two weeks to determine the panel.

Holmes is charged in the July 2012 attack that killed 12 people and injured 70 at a movie theater in Aurora, a Denver suburb. He has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity.

At the hearing Thursday, Holmes wore a red jail uniform and sat quietly at the defense table.

A lawyer for Holmes, Tamara Brady, told Samour that Holmes would chal-



In this July 2012 photo, James Holmes appears in Arapahoe County District Court in Centennial, Colo. Colorado Judge Carlos A. Samour said Thursday, February 27, that Holmes now faces trial in October.

(AP Photo)

lenge the judge's Feb. 20 order granting a prosecution request that Holmes undergo a second mental evaluation.

Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty, which, like the insanity plea, is a factor that means extra time in court for special arguments.

The original trial date was in August. That was pushed to February after prosecutors announced they were seeking the death penalty. The February date was abandoned when prosecutors requested that Holmes undergo a second mental health evaluation. In granting the request for a second mental evaluation, Samour said the first evaluation by the state mental hospital was "incomplete and inadequate." □

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## Judge sets new conditions of John Hinckley's family visits

**JESSICA GRESKO**  
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — John Hinckley, who shot and wounded President Ronald Reagan in 1981, soon will be spending more than half of his time outside a Washington mental hospital.

In an order Wednesday that Hinckley's lawyer called a "milestone," a judge laid out the guidelines for the monthly visits of 17 days that Hinckley will be allowed to make to his mother's home in Virginia. Hinckley, who was found to be insane when he shot Reagan, has since 2006 been allowed to leave St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington to visit his mother's home in Williamsburg, Virginia. The length of those visits has expanded over the years with the goal that Hinckley will ultimately live there full time.

In December, U.S. District Court Judge Paul L. Friedman ruled that Hinckley should be allowed to make visits of 17 days, an increase from previous 10-day visits. In the 10-page order, the judge laid out the parameters of the visits. Hinckley's lawyer, Barry Levine, said he expects Hinckley to

make his first 17-day visit in March.

"This is a giant leap for Mr. Hinckley," Levine said, adding that Hinckley's previous visits had been more sporadic.

Hinckley, 58, will be allowed to drive on his own as long as he is traveling to places where people are expecting him. That includes therapy appointments and his volunteer work at a hospital. Previously, he had to be accompanied by his mother or one of his siblings.

The order also allows Hinckley additional time alone, including six unsupervised outings lasting up to four hours each. Previously, he had been allowed up to three hours of unaccompanied time twice a week. He has to carry a GPS-enabled cell phone any time he is unsupervised.

Levine called the latest order "a transition from the hospital to Williamsburg" and he repeated what he has said during court hearings, that Hinckley is not a danger. Hospital officials have said that the mental illness that led Hinckley to shoot Reagan in an effort to impress actress Jodie Foster has been in remission for decades. □



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## Boston, NYC Mayors to Skip St. Patrick's Parades

Continued from Front

Walsh said Thursday he's been trying to broker a deal with the city's parade

groups. But he said organizers do not want the parade to turn into a demonstration for a particular group.

"The theme of the parade

than 1 million people every year to watch about 200,000 participants, including marching bands and thousands of uniformed city workers. It has

but still marched in the traditional parade all 12 years he was in office.

Judges have said the private organizers of New York's parade have a constitutional right to choose participants in their event. The organizers have ruled that some groups, such as colleges or civic organizations, can identify themselves, but LGBT groups cannot.

The Boston parade, sponsored by the South Boston Allied War Veterans Council, has had a long and torturous history on the question of whether gay groups can march.

State courts forced the sponsors to allow the Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston to march in the parade in 1992 and 1993. In 1994, the sponsors canceled the parade rather than allow the group to participate.

State courts forced the sponsors to allow the Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston to march in the parade in 1992 and 1993. In 1994, the sponsors canceled the parade rather than allow the group to participate.



Boston Mayor Martin Walsh speaks to media in Boston, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014. Walsh will boycott St. Patrick's Day parades to protest policies on gay groups. Walsh said this week he's trying to broker a deal with his city's parade organizers to allow a group of gay military veterans to march. The son of Irish immigrants said that allowing gay groups to participate is "long overdue."

(AP Photo/Elise Amendola)

organizers to allow a gay veterans group sponsored by MassEquality to march in this year's parade. He said allowing gay groups to participate is long overdue.

"It's 2014 — it's far beyond the time where we should be even having this discussion because they're veterans who fought for this country just like any other veteran," Walsh said.

"I made a commitment during the campaign ... that I would fight for equality and that's what this is all about."

But parade planners appeared unwilling to budge. Lead parade organizer Philip Wunschke Jr. said gay people are not prohibited from marching with other

is St. Patrick's Day. It is not a sexually oriented parade," he said. "All we want to do is have a happy parade. The parade is a day of celebration, not demonstration."

In New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio said he will skip America's largest St. Patrick's Day parade in Manhattan because participants are not allowed to carry signs or banners identifying themselves as gay.

"I will be participating in a number of other events to honor the Irish heritage of this city," de Blasio said during a press conference earlier this month.

"But I simply disagree with the organizers of that parade."

The parade draws more

long been a mandatory stop on the city's political trail. It dates from 1762, more than a century before the city's five boroughs linked to form modern New York City.

Since the 1990s, the event's ban on pro-gay signs has sparked protests and lawsuits and led to the creation of an alternative, gay-friendly St. Patrick's Day parade in Queens. In recent years, some elected officials — including de Blasio when he was a public advocate — attended the alternative parade and boycotted the traditional parade.

Michael Bloomberg, de Blasio's predecessor, was a staunch supporter of same-sex marriage rights,

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# Mixed success so far for America's health law co-ops

REED ABELSON  
KATIE THOMAS  
JO CRAVEN MCGINTY  
© 2014 New York Times

The rented offices of HealthyCT, a new insurer

like Anthem, the state's dominant insurer whose offices are a 10-minute drive away.

Lawmakers were hoping for that newcomer's zeal

tell," Ken Lalime, the chief executive of HealthyCT, said recently from his office in Wallingford, Conn.

But so far, few in Connecticut are listening. Just 1,700

ers, Anthem and ConnectiCare, have outpaced it.

"Our goal was five times that, by this point," Lalime said.

The story of HealthyCT and its disappointing enrollment figures illustrates how uneven the co-ops' performance has been more than halfway through the sign-up period in the first year of the new insurance exchanges, an analysis by The New York Times shows. In contrast to Connecticut, the co-op in Maine, Maine Community Health Options, has grabbed the majority of enrollment, outpacing Anthem, its sole competitor, which is owned by one of the nation's largest insurers, WellPoint.

How the co-ops fare will be a key indicator of the success of President Barack Obama's highly charged health care law because they are crucial in determining whether the law can inject more competition into the nation's entrenched insurance market. The co-ops were a late addition to the Affordable Care Act, proposed as an alternative to the so-called

public option, a plan that would have been offered directly by the federal government and that was met with political resistance. The idea was to offer consumers more choice in areas then dominated by just one or two insurers. The co-ops received federal loans, and must be largely governed by their members.

The program is being heatedly debated in Washington, where congressional Republicans recently warned that many of the co-ops could fail, putting at risk the nearly \$2 billion in government loans that helped create them. Democrats point to the co-ops as agents of change, saying they have driven down prices in areas where there was little competition.

Figures released by the Obama administration on Tuesday show that about 4 million people have signed up for health care coverage in the state and federal exchanges. About 300,000 have chosen a co-op, according to John Morrison, the former president of the National Alliance of State Health Co-Ops. □



**Ken Lalime, chief executive of HealthyCT, a new non-profit health insurer with only 2,000 policyholders, at their offices in Wallingford, Conn. Democrats supporting the Affordable Care Act have much riding on the success of co-operative insurers, and some co-ops have fared quite well, with Maine Community Health Options grabbing the majority of new enrollees in that state.**

(Christopher Capozziello/The New York Times)

in Connecticut, bustle with the energy of a startup. The sales force takes pride in noting that HealthyCT is a truly local outfit, governed by members, rather than a for-profit behemoth

when they added a provision to the federal health care law setting up 23 non-profit cooperatives intended to shake up the insurance market.

"We've got a great story to

customers have signed up for plans through the co-op, about 3 percent of those who have bought coverage in the state's new insurance marketplace, where other carri-

## Mormons:

## People don't get own planets in afterlife

BRADY McCOMBS  
Associated Press

**SALT LAKE CITY (AP)** — The Mormon Church is pushing back against the notion that members of the faith are taught they'll get their own planet in the afterlife, a misconception popularized in pop culture most recently by the Broadway show "The Book of Mormon." A newly-posted article affirms the faith's belief that humans can become like God in eternity, but says the "cartoonish image of people receiving their own planets" is not how members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints envision it.

"While few Latter-day Saints would identify with caricatures of having their own planet, most would agree that the awe inspired by creation hints at our creative potential in the eter-

nities," the article says.

The expectation of exaltation is more figurative and ambiguous than boiling it down to living on one planet, it says. "Church members imagine exaltation less through images of what they will get and more through the relationships they have now and how those relationships might be purified and elevated," the article says. The 3,500-word article is part of a series of recent online pieces posted on the church website that explain, expand or clarify on some of the more sensitive gospel topics.

Past articles have addressed the faith's past ban on black men in the lay clergy and the early history of polygamy.

The series of postings have been applauded by religious scholars who say the church is finally ac-

knowledging some of the most controversial or sensitive parts of its history and doctrine that it once side-stepped. "The church has become fully aware that scholarship and history is a double edge sword," said Terryl Givens, professor of literature and religion and the James Bostwick Chair of English at the University of Richmond. "They can work in the church's favor, but they can also be unsettling." The new article, entitled "Becoming Like God," doesn't mention Kolob, referred to in the Book of Abraham as a planet or star closest to the throne of God.

Kolob is mentioned in a Mormon hymn, but interpretations that it is the planet where God lives, or the place where church members will go when they die. □



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## US Financial Front:

# Yellen: Fed monitoring recent weaker economic data

**MARTIN CRUTSINGER**  
**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen noted Thursday that some recent economic data have pointed to weaker-than-expected gains in consumer spending and job growth. She said the Fed will be watching to see whether the slowdown proves only a temporary blip caused by severe winter weather.

Yellen told the Senate Banking Committee that the Fed will be alert to upcoming data to make sure that the U.S. economy keeps strengthening.

"We have seen quite a bit of soft data over the last month or six weeks," Yellen said. "We need to get a firmer handle about how much of the softer data can be explained by the weather."

Responding to a question, Yellen repeated the Fed's assurances that its pullback in stimulus for the economy is "not on a preset course" and could be modified if there was a "significant change" in the Fed's outlook. The Fed is gradually reducing its monthly bond purchases, which have been intended to keep long-term loan rates low to encourage spending and growth.

Yellen said that while she was open to changing the pace of the Fed's reductions in bond purchases, "I wouldn't want to jump to conclusions" that such a change will be needed.



**Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014, before the Senate Banking Committee to deliver the semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress. Yellen noted that some recent economic data have pointed to weaker-than-expected gains in consumer spending and job growth. She said the Fed will be watching to see whether the slowdown proves only a temporary blip caused by severe winter weather.**

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

Yellen repeated remarks she made to a House committee earlier this month that the job market's recovery is "far from complete." She said she expects Fed policies to favor low interest rates "for quite some time." Yellen's appearance Thursday completed her first twice-a-year report to Congress since becoming Fed chair this month. Her Senate appearance had been postponed by a snowstorm that shut federal offices in Washington on Feb. 13.

In both her House and Senate appearances, Yellen sought to emphasize policy continuity with her predecessor, Ben Bernanke, who stepped down last month after eight years leading the central bank. □

## Applications for US jobless benefits rise to 348K

**C. S. RUGABER**  
**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits rose 14,000 last week to a seasonally adjusted 348,000, though the broader trend in applications remained stable. But the four-week average was unchanged at 338,250, the Labor Department said Thursday. Applications are a rough proxy for layoffs. The average is not far above pre-recession levels, a sign companies are laying off few workers. Economists said that winter storms two weeks ago may have caused some people

to delay submitting their applications until last week, temporarily boosting the figures.

"Other evidence continues to point clearly to reasonably robust labor demand so we very much doubt the underlying trend in claims is picking up," Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said in a note to clients. Applications have been mostly steady in recent weeks, even though hiring faltered in January and February. That suggests employers may be reluctant to add many jobs, but they aren't worried enough about future growth to step

up layoffs.

Nearly 3.5 million people received unemployment aid in the week ending Feb. 8, the latest data available. That's about 25,000 fewer than the previous week. Harsh winter weather has chilled hiring in recent months. Employers added just 113,000 jobs in January. That followed a gain of only 75,000 in December. Those figures are about half the monthly pace of the past two years.

On the positive side, the unemployment rate fell in January to a five-year low of 6.6 percent from 6.7 percent, as more of those out of work found jobs. And hir-

ing rose in manufacturing and construction, two higher-paying industries that are key drivers of growth. Still, the bitterly cold weather has contributed to a run of disappointing economic data since the start of the year. Sales of existing homes plummeted in January to the slowest pace in 18 months, held back by the weather, higher interest rates and rising home prices.

Builders broke ground on 16 percent fewer homes in January compared with December, the Commerce Department said this week. That was the second straight decline. □



# New US food labels would highlight calories, sugar

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Obama administration is proposing new food labels that would make it easier to know about calories and added sugars, a reflection of the shifting science behind nutrition.

Fat was the focus two decades ago when the labels first were created, but nutritionists are now more concerned with how many calories we eat.

Under the proposed changes, calories would be in larger, bolder type on food labels, and consumers for the first time would know whether foods have added sugars.

Serving sizes would be updated. They have long been misleading, with many single-serving packages listing multiple servings, so the calorie count is lower. "Our guiding principle here is very simple, that you as a parent and a consumer should be able to walk into your local grocery store, pick up an item off the shelf and be able to tell whether it's good for your family," said first lady Michelle Obama, who

joined the Food and Drug Administration in announcing the proposed changes Thursday at the White House. Mrs. Obama made the announcement as part of her Let's Move initiative to combat child obesity, which is celebrating its fourth anniversary. On Tuesday, she announced new Agriculture Department rules that would reduce marketing of less-healthy foods in schools.

The first lady and FDA Commissioner Margaret Hamburg said one of the aims of the new labels is to make them less confusing for harried parents shopping at the grocery store. Hamburg called the revision "a more user-friendly version" of the current label.

The new nutrition labels are likely several years away. The FDA will take comments on the proposal for 90 days, and a final rule could take another year. Once it's final, the agency has proposed giving industry two years to comply.

The FDA projects food companies will have to pay around \$2 billion as they change the labels.

The Grocery Manufacturers Association, the industry group that represents the nation's largest food companies, did not respond to any specific parts of the proposal but called it a "thoughtful review."

President Pamela Bailey

said it was important to the food companies that the labels "ultimately serve to inform, and not confuse, consumers."

It was still not yet clear what the final labels would look like. The FDA offered two labels in its propos-

no longer required.

Both versions list calories above all of those nutrients in a large, bold type.

The proposed rules would also overhaul serving sizes for soda and single-serving packages. Both 12-ounce and 20-ounce sodas would



First lady Michelle Obama speaks in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014, about helping parents and other consumers make healthier choices as part of her Let's Move program.

(AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)



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al — one that looks similar to the current version but is shorter and clearer, and another that groups the nutrients into a "quick facts" category for things like fat, carbohydrates, sugars and proteins. There also would be an "avoid too much" category for saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars; and a "get enough" section with vitamin D, potassium, calcium, iron and fiber. Potassium and vitamin D are new additions, based on current thinking that Americans aren't getting enough of those nutrients. Vitamin C and vitamin A listings are

be considered one serving, and many single-serving packages — a bag of chips, a can of soup or a frozen entree, for example — would either be listed as a single serving or list nutrient information by serving and by container.

The inclusion of added sugars to the label was one of the biggest revisions. Nutrition advocates have long asked for that line on the label because it's impossible for consumers to know how much sugar in an item is naturally occurring, like that in fruit and dairy products, and how much is added by the manufacturer. □

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## Armed standoff in Crimea as ex-president looks to Russia

ANDREW HIGGINS  
STEVEN LEE MYERS

© 2014 New York Times

**SIMFEROPOL, Ukraine** - Masked gunmen on Thursday seized government buildings in the capital

creasingly volatile situation, Viktor Yanukovich released a statement Thursday saying that he remained the lawful president of Ukraine and appealed to Russia to protect

ern Russia, six days after he was driven from power by mass protests and fled from Kiev, the Ukrainian capital. Local police officers in Simferopol, the Crimean regional capital, sealed

a source of tension between Ukraine and Russia for decades: the territory was transferred to Ukraine by the Russian Federation when they were both components of the Soviet Union in 1954, and Ukraine retained it when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, though Russia still maintains important military bases there, including the home port of the Black Sea Fleet. Oleksandr V. Turchynov, the speaker of Parliament and acting president of Ukraine, urged Russian military forces early Thursday not to stray out of the designated Russian military zones.

"I am addressing the Russian Black Sea Fleet command with a demand: All military servicemen should stay within the boundaries of the territories stipulated by agreement," Turchynov said as he presided over the parliament. "Any movement of military servicemen with weapons outside this territory will be viewed as military aggression."

Arsen Avakov, Ukraine's acting interior minister, said the new government was taking unspecified measures "to counter the extremists' actions and prevent an escalation of an

armed conflict in the center of the city." It was unclear, however, how much authority Avakov has over the police and other government agencies in Crimea, where many in the heavily ethnic Russian population view the ouster of Yanukovich as a fascist coup.

"Provocateurs are on the march," Avakov said, making his announcement, as he has others, on his Facebook account. "It's a time for cool heads, the healthy consolidation of forces, and careful action."

In his statement, Yanukovich warned that the largely Russian regions in eastern and southern Ukraine, including Crimea, would "not accept the anarchy and outright lawlessness" that has gripped the country.

"I continue to consider myself the lawful head of the Ukrainian government, elected on the basis of the free expression of the will of Ukrainian citizens," he said in the statement, according to two news agencies, RIA Novosti and Itar-Tass. "I cannot be indifferent to the tragic events in my homeland." Whether he can cling to any part of his former power remains far from clear. □



**Anti-Yanukovich protesters riding on top of an army armored vehicle maneuver at the Independence Square, the epicenter of the country's current unrest, in Kiev, Ukraine, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014. Ukraine put its police on high alert after dozens of armed pro-Russia men stormed and seized local government buildings in Ukraine's Crimea region early Thursday and raised Russian flags.**  
(AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti)

of the Crimea region of Ukraine, barricaded themselves inside and raised the Russian flag, raising the specter of a separatist rebellion that could tear the country apart. Further inflaming an in-

"my personal safety." While his precise whereabouts remained a mystery, Russian news agencies reported subsequently that Yanukovich would hold a news conference Friday in Rostov-on-Don, a city in south-

off access to the government buildings, including the regional parliament, which were seized in mysterious overnight raids by people who appeared to be militant ethnic Russians. Crimea has been

## Former German president acquitted of graft charges

MELISSA EDDY

© 2014 New York Times

**BERLIN** - A former president of Germany, Christian Wulff, was acquitted Thursday of corruption charges from his time as a regional governor, handing him the exoneration he had sought since stepping down from the presidency in 2012. Wulff, 54, had once been touted as a potential chancellor. He stepped down from the Christian Demo-

cratic Union, the conservative party of Chancellor Angela Merkel, to run for the presidency when he was handpicked by her as a candidate in 2010. He served only 20 months as the head of state, a largely ceremonial position, before relinquishing the job amid media reports that he had accepted gifts and favors from friends during his seven years as governor of the state of Lower

Saxony. It was the first time in modern Germany that a former president had been put on trial.

The Hanover state court ruled Thursday that there was not sufficient evidence to find Wulff guilty of illegally accepting favors while in office.

"Now I can concentrate on the future," Wulff told reporters after the ruling was handed down. He said that his immediate

plans involved spending time with his daughter and young son.

Prosecutors in Hanover had charged Wulff with allowing a film producer friend to pay 720 euros (about \$980) in expenses at the annual Oktoberfest beer festival in Munich in 2008, in exchange for lobbying the head of a leading industrial company to back a project for which the friend was seeking financing.

Judge Frank Rosenow said the court viewed the relationship between the former president and the film producer as a friendship that included picking up the tabs for each other at different times, and not a case of official corruption, reported DPA, the German news agency.

"There is simply no powerful evidence against the defendants," DPA quoted the judge as saying. □



## Syrian opposition demands full investigation of ambush killings

**ZEINA KARAM**  
**Associated Press**

**BEIRUT (AP)** — The main Western-backed Syrian opposition group demanded an investigation Thursday into an ambush by government forces that state media said killed 175 rebels near Damascus a day earlier. The Syrian National Coalition disputed the government report, saying the people killed were civilians trying to escape the siege imposed by President Bashar Assad's forces on suburbs of the Syrian capital. The government and the rebels fighting to topple Assad often have conflicting reports on events and abuses in Syria. In the absence of independent media and international journalists, both camps actively try to control the narrative of the civil war. The Syrian government said Wednesday that army troops killed 175 rebels, many of them al-Qaida-linked fighters, in an ambush described as one of the deadliest attacks by government forces against fighters near Damascus. State run media aired pictures of the aftermath, showing bodies, some of them bloodied, on the ground. Some wore military fatigues, but most were in civilian clothes with bags of belongings scattered nearby.

An opposition group, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the ambush in the eastern Ghouta region was carried out by the Lebanese Hezbollah group, which has been instrumental in helping Assad's forces push back rebels entrenched in the suburbs of the capital city. It said most of those killed were members of the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and other Islamic brigades.

The Syrian National Coalition said pro-Assad forces, backed by Hezbollah fighters, ambushed "a convoy of civilians fleeing the siege in eastern Ghouta." In a statement, the group called on the United Nations to carry out an independent investigation.

It was not possible to verify either claim.

Syria's conflict began nearly three years ago with largely peaceful protests, and gradually transformed into civil war following a brutal military crackdown on protesters. More than 140,000 people have been killed, according to opposition activists.

On Thursday, a mortar shell landed near a hospital in a government-controlled neighborhood of the central city of Homs Thursday, killing at least five people, while a roadside bomb went off in front of the French hospital in Damascus, killing one. Syria's state-run media said.

State TV said the mortar round in Homs hit a car near the Al-Malek Hospital in the Akrama neighborhood. It said 13 people were also wounded in the attack. Akrama is predominantly home to members of Assad's Alawite sect.

Syria's opposition is dominated by the country's Sunni Muslim majority.

Also Thursday, Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem said Syria was commitment to its obligations related to the destruction of chemical weapons, despite missing two deadlines in the past two months to remove the chemicals. The U.S. has accused Damascus of using stalling tactics and the Pentagon Thursday urged Syria to move faster.

The Norwegian armed forces released footage for the first time Thursday showing an international operation to remove the agents from Syria, conducted earlier this year.

In the footage, members of a Danish-Norwegian task force are seen preparing aboard the Norwegian Frigate KNM "Helge Ingstad" as the ship approaches Latakia harbor. □

## Blast hits Qatar's capital of Doha, killing 12

**ABDULLAH REBHY**  
**Associated Press**

**DOHA, Qatar (AP)** — An apparent gas explosion Thursday at a restaurant near a filling station in the Qatari capital killed 12 people and wounded several more, emergency services officials in the energy-rich Gulf nation said. Initial indications suggested a burst natural gas tank atop a Turkish restaurant was to blame for the blast, which happened shortly after 10 a.m. near the popular Landmark Mall shopping center in the capital, Doha.

The force of the explosion caused the partial collapse of the Istanbul Restaurant and sent shrapnel

flying as far as 50 meters (160 feet) away, authorities said. Officials are treating the explosion as an accident, though it is unclear what ignited the tank.

The 12 people reported killed were all Asian or Arab, said Maj. Gen. Saad al-Khulaifi, who heads the country's police force. He did not give further details on their identities or nationalities.

He said 31 others were wounded, some seriously. He vowed authorities would conduct a full and transparent investigation.

The civil defense director of operations, Hamid al-Duhaimi, said four people were found dead at the scene and the others died

on their way to the hospital. Alexandra Permuy, 25, a graduate student from Miami who lives nearby, was startled awake by the explosion.

"At first I thought it was just thunder ... but when I looked out the window there's not a cloud in the sky," Permuy said.

The restaurant had recently opened following renovations and is situated among a strip of eateries that get particularly busy late at night, she said.

Hamad Medical Corp., which manages eight hospitals and the national ambulance service, put out a call for blood donations on social media shortly after the blast happened. □



**Firemen work at the site of an explosion in Doha, Qatar, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014. A apparent gas explosion Thursday at a restaurant near a filling station in the Qatari capital killed a dozen people and wounded several more, emergency services officials in the energy-rich Gulf nation said. (AP Photo)**

## Egypt reshuffles its top military council

**MAGGIE MICHAEL**  
**Associated Press**

**CAIRO (AP)** — Egypt's interim president reshuffled the country's top military council Thursday and installed the nation's military chief as its leader for the first time, part of a series of decrees that experts say gives the military more independence as its current leader is widely expected to run for president.

Adly Mansour's decree is part of series of declarations related to rearranging the country's sprawling security and military establishment nearly two months before presidential elec-

tions. It puts the military chief — now Field Marshal Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi — in charge of the top military council known as the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. Whoever succeeds el-Sissi, who will have to step down to run for president, will be the head of the council.

El-Sissi led the July overthrow of Islamist Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's first freely elected president, following days of demonstrations by millions of Egyptians who demanded him to step down.

Mansour also created a new National Defense

Council to bring military commanders together with civilian ministers to decide on the country's top security matters in line with the country's newly passed constitution. The constitution also gives the supreme council the power to name the defense minister. While the president could remove the minister, he can't name a replacement without the council's endorsement. Mansour also issued a separate decree stating that the defense minister must not be appointed from outside the military and must serve for two presidential terms. □





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## Warlords with dark pasts battle in Afghan election

ROD NORDLAND

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**KABUL, Afghanistan** - Ashraf Ghani, the apparent front-runner in the Afghan presidential race this year, was once unstinting in his opinion of one of the country's most prominent warlords, Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, calling him a "known killer."

He said that in 2009, when Dostum was supporting President Hamid Karzai for re-election. Now, Ghani simply calls Dostum his running mate.

In fact, of the 11 campaigns in the April 5 presidential election, six include at least one candidate on the ticket who is widely viewed as a warlord, with pasts and policies directly at odds with Western attempts to improve human rights here.

That is the field that U.S. military and diplomatic planners have to consider as they take up President Barack Obama's call Tuesday to look past Karzai and try to get the next Afghan administration to sign a long-term security deal.

For officials working to finalize the bilateral security agreement, there is still potential good news: All 11 of the Afghan presidential candidates say they support the deal, which would allow Western troops to stay past 2014.

But beyond that, U.S. officials have taken pains to avoid expressing any preference for a particular candidate, sensitive to accusations from Karzai that they interfered in the 2009 vote, when U.S. pressure led him to agree to a runoff after widespread reports of election fraud.

The number of candidates with some sort of unsavory past has also made U.S. officials especially leery of weighing in, despite the

fact that many warlords have been recipients of U.S. support and cash.

Recently, for instance, allegations circulated that U.S. Ambassador James B. Cunningham had met secretly with one of the presidential candidates, Abdul Rab Rasoul Sayyaf, who has been accused of war crimes and who while in Parliament helped pass a law giving amnesty to war criminals and tried to repeal a law outlawing violence against women.

A U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonym-

ists accuse him of ordering mass killings. But he was also a stalwart of the U.S.-allied Northern Alliance that overthrew the Taliban in 2001, and he is a powerful political leader among Afghanistan's ethnic Uzbek minority.

Dostum is a vice presidential candidate on the ticket of Ghani, who is regarded as the front-runner based on an early poll conducted for the U.S. government. Ghani is a former World Bank official who helped negotiate an initial version of the security agreement,

dential tickets, the only two without members accused of being warlords are those of Zalmay Rassoul, the low-profile former foreign minister, and Qayyum Karzai, the president's brother and the owner of restaurants in Baltimore.

Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad, a tribal leader appointed by Karzai to negotiate the withdrawal of either Rassoul or Qayyum Karzai, said the president had thrown his weight behind Rassoul. The president's brother was debating whether to withdraw,



**Supporters of Abdul Rasoul Sayyaf, a presidential candidate who has been accused of war crimes, attend a rally for his campaign in Kabul, Afghanistan. More than half of the presidential campaign tickets include at least one politician widely viewed as a former warlord, with pasts and policies directly at odds with Western ideals about improving human rights.**

(Mauricio Lima/The New York Times)

ity because of the political sensitivities of the issue, said that Cunningham and other senior officials had met with all 11 presidential candidates "as part of our normal diplomatic engagement."

Asked what would happen if someone accused as a war criminal were elected, the official said the U.S. government would not speculate on the outcome of the election.

Dostum's candidacy poses thorny questions. He still maintains a private army, and human-rights activ-

and as a Karzai adviser he presided over the handover of responsibility for security to Afghan forces.

His most significant challenger, Abdullah Abdullah, who ran second to Karzai in 2009, also has ticket members branded as warlords: His vice-presidential candidates - Mohammad Khan, a former leader of the insurgent party Hezb-i-Islami, and Mohammad Mohaqiq, a Hazara leader of the Wahdat party - have been accused of abuses by human rights officials. Of the leading five presi-

Waqad said, and if so, whom to endorse.

Human rights activists are alarmed by the number of warlords still in the political mainstream.

Ajmal Baluchzada, a member of the Transitional Justice Coordination Group, a coalition of Western-financed groups that lobbies for past war crimes to be acknowledged and punished, said that some of the men initially tried to stay out of the spotlight after the Taliban's overthrow, worried about potential war-crimes proceedings. □

## New missionary held, displayed by North Korea

CHOE SANG-HUN

© 2014 New York Times

**SEOUL, South Korea** - A South Korean Baptist missionary held in North Korea appeared in a government-arranged news conference in Pyongyang on Thursday, saying that he had plotted to build underground churches in the isolated country to help undermine its government. The missionary, Kim Jong-uk, 50, called himself a "criminal" and apologized for the "anti-state crime" he said he had committed against the North while working at the behest of the South's National Intelligence Service.

North Korea announced in November that it had arrested a South Korean spy, but until Thursday it had rejected the South Korean government's request to identify him. It was unclear whether Kim was speaking his own mind during the government-arranged news conference, to which The Associated Press and other foreign journalists in Pyongyang were invited.

The North Korean government has used such news conferences in Pyongyang or interviews with the Choson Sinbo, a pro-North Korean newspaper in Japan, to let Kenneth Bae, a Korean-American missionary held in the North since late 2012, speak to the outside world. Bae has also said that he apologized for his anti-North Korean "crime," for which he was sentenced to 15 years hard labor last year, and appealed for Washington's intervention to win his release.

Analysts have said that the North was using the news conferences to draw interest to the predicament of the detainees and force Washington to engage the North in dialogue. □



## Venezuela opposition struggles to expand appeal

**BEN FOX  
C. SHERMAN**

**Associated Press**

**CARACAS, Venezuela**  
**(AP)** — It is hard to find toilet paper or flour in oil-rich Venezuela these days and the country is plagued by some of the highest inflation, murder and kidnapping rates in the world.

Clashes between protesters and security forces loyal to the president have left 16 dead, and a telegenic opposition leader has been thrown in jail. But don't expect a Ukraine-style street revolution anytime soon in this South American nation, where the frequently out-manuevered opposition hasn't united behind a single strategy or managed to broaden its appeal beyond the largely middle-class, educated followers it's had on its side all along.

The man they are up against, President Nicolas Maduro, has a near-complete grip on the military, broadcast media and institutions from congress to the judiciary after 15 years of socialist rule. That could change if the protests continue and unrest gets further out of hand. But for many Venezuelans, the opposition's two highest profile leaders, former presidential candidate Henrique Capriles and the jailed Leopoldo Lopez, are still viewed as part of an elite detached from the working class life. For years the opposition has insisted the government is illegitimate rather than succeeding in building bridges across class lines, reinforcing perceptions that it hasn't evolved

since it backed a failed 2002 coup against then President Hugo Chavez. "The opposition is always convinced that it's a majority and therefore it thinks that the government wins elections by fraud," said David Smilde, a senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America who spends part of the year conducting research in

watch on television burning trash and setting up barricades in leafy neighborhoods that they could never aspire to live in. On top of that, the two men leading the opposition haven't been able to agree on a strategy. Capriles has come closest to expanding the base by reaching out to Chavez backers, promising to pro-

opposition figures to rally behind him. Capriles conceded the demonstrations may have strengthened Maduro's hand in the short term by distracting Venezuelans from their daily frustrations and giving him a convenient scapegoat on which to blame a coming economic crisis caused by heavy-handed govern-

ment policies. Indeed, Maduro has trained state-run television cameras on the barricades of trash and furniture erected by the opposition.

"Now they want to blame me if there are shortages, but they are the ones who don't let through the trucks with rice, grains, milk and flour," Maduro said at a rally on Tuesday with employees of the state telephone company. "The rest of the country is like you all, working, studying." □



**A masked demonstrator throws a rock at riot police during an anti-government protest in Valencia, Venezuela. The protests began with students and were soon joined by others in several cities, upset over crime, economic problems and heavy-handed government response to the protests.**  
**(AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)**

Caracas. But "it's a government that has considerable support." Maduro's party handily won municipal elections in December that were seen as a referendum on his first year in office. An economic decline has accelerated since then, but he continues to funnel government resources into poor neighborhoods. While people there are suffering from the country's economic woes, they still feel little connection with the protesters they

protect the revolution's social gains. That brought him within 225,000 votes of winning the election in April to choose a successor to the late Chavez. But he's been pushed from that path by Lopez, leader of a smaller opposition party, who seized on this month's student-led protests to call even more people into the streets, a move that landed him in jail charged with arson and incitement. That has forced Capriles and other

ment policies. Indeed, Maduro has trained state-run television cameras on the barricades of trash and furniture erected by the opposition.

"Now they want to blame me if there are shortages, but they are the ones who don't let through the trucks with rice, grains, milk and flour," Maduro said at a rally on Tuesday with employees of the state telephone company. "The rest of the country is like you all, working, studying." □

## Amnesty says Jamaica panel needs to be strengthened

**DAVID MCFADDEN**

**Associated Press**

**KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP)**

— Amnesty International said Wednesday that Jamaica must strengthen a recently appointed fact-finding panel if it's to provide conclusive answers about a deadly 2010 security operation and deliver justice to people who lost relatives. Earlier this week, Jamaica's government created a commission of inquiry to examine a May 2010 operation by security forces that killed one soldier and at least 76 civilians during a state of emergency. They said the long-sought panel will conduct a "fair and impartial" look at the effort to catch the island's biggest gang boss and exert legal authority over gang-controlled slums in volatile West Kingston.

But the London-based human rights group asserted that the three-member commission's mandate "falls short of what is needed to obtain truth, justice and reparation" for survivors. "Victims have waited nearly four years for this commission, but regrettably the terms of reference that establish its mandate are seriously flawed and could prejudice the effectiveness of the inquiry," said Chiara Liguori, the group's Caribbean researcher. Basic details of the 2010 security offensive in inner-city West Kingston and other areas remain murky. There have been numerous allegations of indiscriminate shootings, unlawful killings and many arbitrary arrests in the barricaded housing complex of Tivoli Gardens and other slums. Public Defender Earl Witter's office has been looking into complaints that 44 of the 76 civilian deaths could have been unjustifiable.

Amnesty said an imbalance in how the commission's terms of reference are framed could give an appearance of a "pre-determined outcome." □

## Russia warship docks in Havana harbor

**HAVANA (AP)** — A Russian warship was docked in the Havana harbor on Thursday, a day after the country's defense minister announced plans to expand Russia's worldwide military presence. The Viktor Leonov CCB-175 — one of the fleet's Vishnya-class ships, which are generally used for intelligence gathering — drew looks from curious

residents as it sat tied up at the cruise terminal in Old Havana. Both Russian and Cuban flags fluttered from its guy wires. Cuban official media made no immediate mention of its port call. Locals shrugged at the ship's appearance, as well as Moscow's announcement Wednesday that it was seeking permission for naval vessels to use ports

in Cuba and other countries in Latin America, Asia and elsewhere. "I think every country has the right to live the way they want to live and defend themselves," said Armando Torres, a 54-year-old cook who passed by the ship on his way to work in the morning. "We are a country that has always been oppressed and blockaded for so

many years." Cuba and the Soviet Union had close military and economic ties during the Cold War, but the relationship faded after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

The CCB-175 boat is reportedly equipped with sophisticated electronic surveillance gear along with ship-to-air missiles and 30mm anti-aircraft guns. □

many years." Cuba and the Soviet Union had close military and economic ties during the Cold War, but the relationship faded after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

The CCB-175 boat is reportedly equipped with sophisticated electronic surveillance gear along with ship-to-air missiles and 30mm anti-aircraft guns. □

The CCB-175 boat is reportedly equipped with sophisticated electronic surveillance gear along with ship-to-air missiles and 30mm anti-aircraft guns. □





## Residential Community Gold Coast Delivers Wow Factor!

**- 200% Rental Increase, Brand New Website, Expanded Services.**

**WEST PUNT** - Gold Coast, Aruba's newest resort-style residential community in Malmok, is on the move and making a positive mark with enhanced guest services, increased bookings of their rental homes and the recent launch of a brand new website. Guests of Gold Coast now have the option to choose from a wide variety of special requests and services, in addition to housekeeping and laundry services. Prior to their arrival all Gold Coast guests can arrange for services that will definitely deliver a wow factor and provide for an extraordinary stay in Aruba. These new services include pre arrival grocery shopping, the request for an In-house chef, server, bartender or butler, personal laundry, in-house massage, a personal trainer, Spa treatments and babysitting services. Marketing efforts of the Gold Coast residential community were also enhanced with the recent launch of a brand new website: [www.arubarentalsvacation.com](http://www.arubarentalsvacation.com). Functionalities of this new website include a chat room where guests can immediately

reach out with their questions to a Front Office staff member of Gold Coast. The website also features an easy-to-use booking engine for direct bookings of the Gold Coast condos, townhouses and spacious villas.

Lastly, Gold Coast shares its results of the third quarter of 2013. Compared to the same time last year results show a 200% increase in rental business of their condos, townhouses and villas. In addition the occupancy at the rental homes in this residential community also increased by 200% compared to the third quarter of 2012.

Construction activities are still ongoing at Gold Coast and it is to be expected that their magnificent growth will be doubled again next year.

Future expansion includes the construction of a Gold

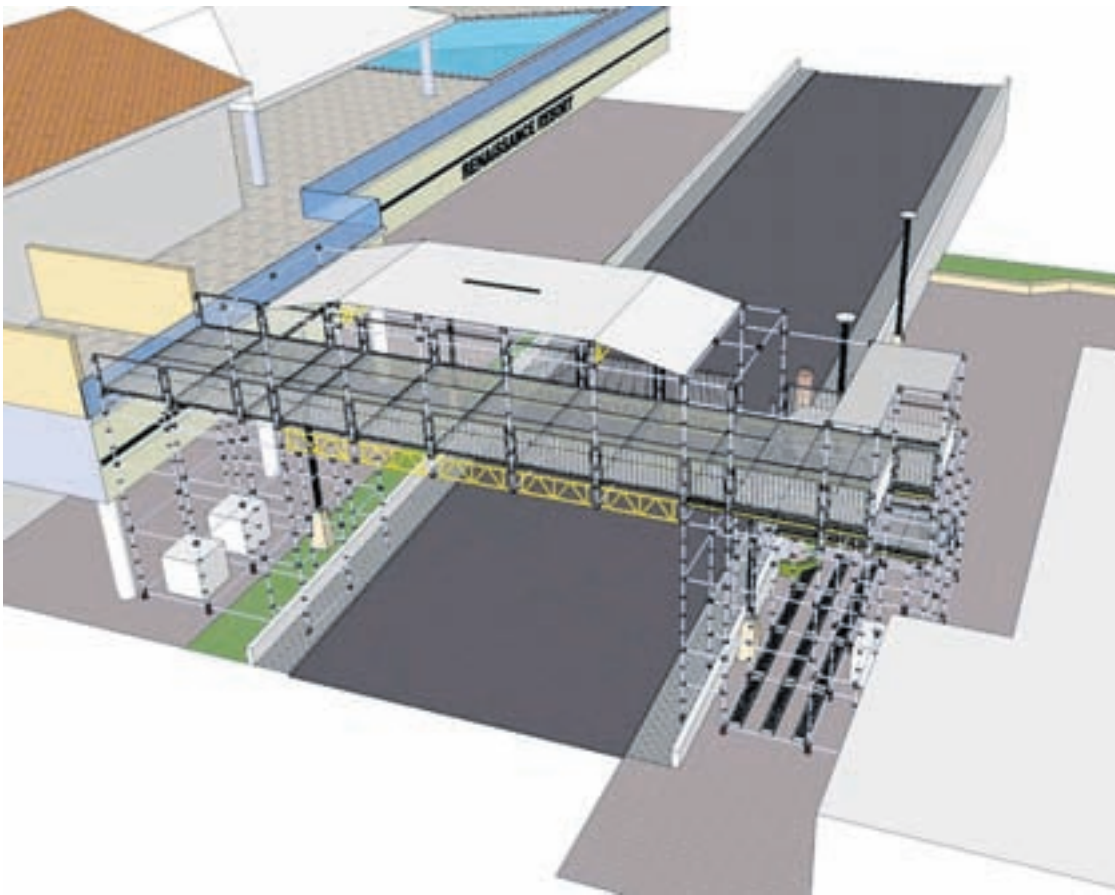


Coast Clubhouse. This multi-purpose Clubhouse will feature 2 tennis courts and large community pool, a convenience store, business center, restaurant, Spa and state of the art Fitness Center. The Gold Coast Clubhouse is to be completed in 2014. □





## A view from a bridge 20 feet above L.G. Smith Boulevard: Renaissance Aruba Resort offers impressive view to Carnival 60!



**ORANJESTAD** - Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino together with GM Affairs is celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Aruban Carnival, in style. For the first time a bridge will be constructed to offer international visitors, guests and

local public an impressive view of the Aruban Carnival. "60 year anniversary of our Carnival should be celebrated in a great way; we want to offer our guests a different way to experience our parades. This 'deck' will offer a helicopter view that

will make the experience of our parades really memorable" this according to Zugheila Lindeborg, marketing executive for Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino. The Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino deck will be located above all the

action of the grand parade in Oranjestad. Those whom are part of the carnival parade (participants) will march underneath the bridge at the same time giving the guest an outstanding view from above! In order to accommodate everyone Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino will offer a RLIFE LIVE package which includes entrance tickets to the VIP deck for Sunday March 2nd at a cost of \$100

per person, beverage tokens and live performances of DJ's; SMB, Mesquitas and Myron Kelly. Those who buy their entrance for the VIP deck will be 20 feet above the L.G. Smith Boulevard. This will definitely provide an unforgettable experience of Carnival 60. Those whom are interested in VIP tickets can email at; [sales@arubarenaissance.com](mailto:sales@arubarenaissance.com). Admission is limited, so don't delay! □

## Aruba Bank is proud to sponsor Aruba's Carnival Youth Queen Elections!



**ORANJESTAD** - The island of Aruba was just recently introduced to its Carnival Youth Queen during the Diamond Jubilee elections at the Entertainment Center, filled with a cheering crowd enjoying the festive atmospheres. Aruba Bank, as one of the main sponsors of Carnival 60 is proud of its active involvement in the festivities in which Carnival Youth Queen Dana Arendsz, representing the T.O.B. Carnival Group, won the ultimate title. Bank representatives Shanouille Bikker and Stephanie Camacho enjoyed the distinct privilege of awarding the final-

ists attractive gifts courtesy of the bank. They report that all participants delivered stellar presentations, and that all seven Youth Queen candidates proved to be very poised, joyful and talented, contributing greatly to the total success of the night. Aruba Bank is hereby extending its heartfelt congratulations to the winner and finalists and to the people of Aruba, for helping stage Carnival 60 as an unforgettable colorful, cultural event, wishing all those in the parades and on the side of the road a great time and a Happy Carnival 2014. □

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*On The Beach*

**Tara Somal**

**She is from United Kingdom**  
**She is on her Honeymoon**

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## At Amazonia Churrascaria / Sushi Salsa, Good Wine Paired with Fantastic Food



**PALM BEACH** - It's true, says Aruba Trading Company resident wine expert Glenn de Kaey, life is too short to drink mediocre wine. Glenn picked five different bottles, four by the Cavit Collection, America's #1 Italian wine, and one by S.A Prum, one of Germany's preeminent wine-making dynasties for a tasting he conducted at Amazonia Churrascaria/ Sushi Salsa for an audience

made up of the restaurant carvers and servers. Guest of honor AJ, Aaron Jay, of the Cavit Collection joined in for the afternoon session which was designed to expand the staff's knowledge of the extensive wine card. The tasting took off with Lunetta Prosecco, a delicious sparkling wine produced by Cavit in its large facility in Trento, dedicated exclusively to the production of world-class sparkling wines. Lunetta Prosecco, little moon in Italian, is a delightful companion for appetizers, hors d'oeuvres or sushi, pairing nicely with Amazonia Churrascaria's salad bar or its artistic sushi. Cavit Pinot Grigio was next on the agenda for the afternoon, appreciated world wide as a genuine Italian best seller, a fresh, fruity and versatile wine which in a blind tasting that afternoon received the

highest scores over some of the world's most famous Pino Grigios. Cavit Pino Noir, remarkable for its delicate aromas of black cherry paired with a silky smooth taste, rated high among tasters as the wine lends itself beautifully to meat and/ or seafood and would be the perfect companion for a party of Beef and Sushi lovers. Cavit Moscato, with apricot and peach notes, a refreshing effervescent and slightly sweet wine, was deemed the perfect match for Sushi Salsa's spicy tuna rolls. And for dessert Essence Riesling, from the Mosel region in Germany surprised tasters with its pale gold color and its exquisite taste prepared to satisfy and please every palate. Glenn stated that the Aruba Trading Company, appreciates the Amazonia Churrascaria highly mo-



tivated crew and often hosts tastings and seminars to further its knowledge of wine pairing. Pictured here the pleasant process of uncorking and then sipping Prosecco, Pinot Grigio, Pino Noir, Moscato, and Riesling,

perfect selections to accompany any steak lover's or sushi lover's feast at the restaurant. Also on hand for the tasting the Aruba Trading Company's Kavey Yarzagaray and the restaurants' manager Raymond Talbot. □



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## Mclroy takes the lead at Honda Classic

**DOUG FERGUSON**

**AP Golf Writer**

**PALM BEACH GARDENS, Florida (AP)** — On the course where Rory Mclroy first rose to No. 1, he looked as if he might be headed in that direction again on Thursday.

Mclroy swung freely and walked briskly on his way to a 7-under 63, with birdies on the last two holes at PGA National giving him a one-shot lead over Russell Henley after the first round of the Honda Classic.

If nothing else, it was a big improvement from the last official round he played on PGA National.

Mclroy was 7 over through eight holes last year when he became so frustrated with mounting expectations and a slumping game that he walked off the course in the middle of the second round. He said it was a mistake he would never repeat.

He apparently buried the past with his clubs, if not his head. "It's not something I really thought about out there," Mclroy said. "Com-



Golfer Rory Mclroy of Northern Ireland, tees off on the fifth hole during the Pro-Am round of the Honda Classic golf tournament, Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014 in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

ing in this week, I knew that I was playing well and I just wanted to try and get off to a good start. ... Regardless of what happened last year or where it is, it's always nice to shoot a round like this and get yourself in the mix early."

Tiger Woods wouldn't know the feeling so far this year. In his first tournament in a month, Woods couldn't make a birdie putt early and had to scramble for pars late in his round. A birdie on the last hole gave him a 71, leaving him eight shots behind.

"I hit it good starting out, hit it kind of scrappy in the middle and then hit it good at the end," Woods said.

In his other two events this year, Woods was eight shots behind after the opening round at Torrey Pines and five shots behind at Dubai. He goes into the second round on Friday outside the cut line.

Henley opened with five birdies in six holes before he cooled off for a 64.

Continued on Page 20



This Feb. 21, 2014 file photo shows Valerie Maltais of Canada competing in a women's 1000m short track speedskating quarterfinal at the Iceberg Skating Palace during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

**DAVID BAUDER**

**AP Television Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — NBC said it worked with Olympic officials to stop some 45,000

Associated Press

instances of illegally posted video or pirate streams that surfaced to show competition during the Sochi games.

## NBC says thousands of illegal video stopped

The chase after video pirates operates in the shadows with an intensity all its own. Broadcasters pay big money to the International Olympic Committee — in NBC's case, \$775 million for Sochi — in return for exclusive TV and streaming rights and guard that exclusivity keenly.

Officials estimate that 20,000 videos of Olympic competition were kept off YouTube, either through filtering technology that prevents them from being posted in the first place or

locates and takes them down shortly after they are added. Another 20,000 were stopped from distribution on similar video-sharing sites popular elsewhere in the world, like Dailymotion in Europe or VK.com in Russia, NBC said.

The hunt went beyond the traditional video-sharing sites. BuzzFeed said NBC contacted the website after it posted some figure skating video and asked that it be taken down, and the site complied.

The anti-piracy police also

said they located and stopped an estimated 5,000 illegal streams of Olympics material, often live competition.

Many of them were posted on for-profit rogue websites that offer consumers material they could not get legally. Through its own websites, NBC streamed every competition live and offered many highlights, but consumers could not get access to this material without proving they were either cable or satellite television subscribers. □



## NHL Capsules

# Canucks deny Blues Central Division lead

The Associated Press

**BUFFALO, New York (AP)** —

Matt D'Agostini outraced Zdeno Chara to a loose puck and scored 22 seconds into overtime, lifting the Buffalo Sabres to a 5-4 win over the Boston Bruins on Wednesday night.

Matt Moulson forced overtime by scoring with 53 seconds left in regulation in a game the Sabres won after squandering a 3-1 second-period lead. Brian Flynn had a goal and assist, while Tyler Myers and Zemgus Girgensons also scored for Buffalo.

Coming off a 3-2 win over Carolina on Tuesday, the Sabres (17-34-8) won consecutive games for only the third time this season, and first since Dec. 17-19.

Chara, Milan Lucic, Brad Marchand and Chris Kelly scored for the Atlantic Division-leading Bruins (37-16-5), in their first game after the NHL's two-week Olympic break.

RED WINGS 2, CANADIENS 1, OT

**MONTREAL (AP)** — Gustav Nyquist scored on a rebound with 28 seconds left in overtime to give the Detroit Red Wings a win over the Montreal Canadiens in the first post-Olympic game for both teams.

Montreal had goalie Peter Budaj pulled for an extra attacker when captain Brian Gionta scored with 29 seconds left in regulation to force overtime.

A team coached by Detroit's Mike Babcock, who led Canada to the gold medal, had not allowed a goal since Lauris Darzins got one at 15:41 of the first period of Canada's 2-1 win over Latvia in the quarterfinals in Sochi.

Todd Bertuzzi scored in the first period for Detroit.

CANUCKS 1, BLUES 0

**VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)** — Jannik Hansen scored the game's only goal and Eddie Lack made 20 saves for his third shutout of the season as the Vancouver Canucks blanked the St. Louis Blues. The Canucks ended their losing streak at seven



St. Louis Blues' Barret Jackman, left, checks Vancouver Canucks' Jordan Schroeder into the St. Louis bench during the first period of an NHL hockey game in Vancouver, British Columbia, on Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014. Associated Press

games while moving into sole possession of eighth place in the Western Conference. The Blues dropped their third straight decision to Vancouver this season.

Hansen broke a scoreless deadlock at 11:13 of the third period. He took a backhand stretch pass from Tom Sestito from deep in the Vancouver zone just past center ice, raced in on a breakaway and beat Jaroslav Halak with a high shot.

KINGS 6, AVALANCHE 4

**DENVER (AP)** — Anze Kopitar had two goals, including the decisive score in the third period, and the Los Angeles Kings rallied to beat the Colorado Avalanche.

Kopitar's second goal of the night and 19th of the season put the Kings, who trailed by two goals midway through the second period, back in front.

The Kings were on the power play when Jeff Carter, in the middle of a scramble in front of the net, swung at a loose puck, sending it straight up in the air. When

the puck hit the ice, Kopitar got his stick on it and sent it into the net past goalie

Jean-Sebastian Giguere at 3:13 of the third period. Justin Williams added an

empty-net goal with 11 seconds left to round out the scoring. □

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# AP Sources: Woods to get new sponsor for PGA event



Golfer Tiger Woods watches his tee shot on the 18th hole during the first round of the Honda Classic golf tournament, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014 in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

**DOUG FERGUSON**  
AP Golf Writer  
**PALM BEACH GARDENS, Florida (AP)** — The U.S. PGA Tour is closing on a deal for Detroit-based Quicken Loans to become the title sponsor of Tiger Woods' tournament at Congressional, The Associated Press has learned. Two people who have been told about the deal said Quicken Loans could

begin its sponsorship before the next tournament, to be played from June 26-29. They spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal was not completed and has not been announced. Dan Gilbert, who owns the Cleveland Cavaliers, is the chairman and founder Quicken Loans, the nation's largest online home lender. The company closed \$70 billion of volume across 50

states in 2012. It would be a big boost to the Tiger Woods Foundation, which receives the net proceeds from the event currently called the AT&T National. The foundation has created seven Tiger Woods Learning Centers, three of them in the Washington, D.C., area. AT&T, in the final year of its contract, was not planning to renew the sponsorship. □

# Webb shoots 66 to take 1-shot lead in Singapore

**JUSTIN BERGMAN**  
Associated Press  
**SINGAPORE (AP)** — Karrie Webb slipped up several weeks ago at the Australian Ladies Masters when she signed an incorrect scorecard and was disqualified. For a moment at the HSBC Women's Champions on Thursday, she thought she had made a similar mistake. After shooting a 6-under 66 to take a one-stroke lead in the opening round, Webb feared she may have forgotten to sign her scorecard. She rushed back into the scoring tent only to find her scorecard was just fine. "I've just had trouble getting out of the scorer tent since then," she said about her mistake in Australia. "I walked out (today) and couldn't remember if I signed my card, which it would have been too late anyway." Sweden's Caroline Hedwall and American Paula Creamer were tied for second after shooting 5-under 67, a stroke ahead of 2012 champion Angela Stanford and Taiwan's Teresa Lu in joint fourth. Disqualification aside, Webb is having a strong start to the season. A week

after the ill-fated Australian Ladies Masters, she won her fifth Women's Australian Open title, and 40th overall. The 39-year-old Australian has won seven majors in her long career, but none since the Kraft Nabisco Championship in 2006. Her results have been consistent, if not dominant, in recent years — she had six top-10 finishes on the LPGA Tour last year and one win at the ShopRite LPGA Classic. "I've had a good career and I feel like I want to finish in the fashion that I started," she said. "I just continue to work hard, and my working hard now is probably a little different to my working hard 20 years ago, but it's still working hard." Webb birdied four of her first six holes on Thursday, then sank a difficult 15-foot putt to save par on the par-4 11th hole. Her only mistake on the green was a close miss on the 12th hole when her birdie putt from 2 feet lipped out of the hole. Creamer has also had a fast start to the year, finishing tied for third at her first two tournaments — the Bahamas LPGA Classic and the Women's Australian Open. □



Phil Mickelson tees off on the seventh hole during the first round of the Honda Classic golf tournament, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014, in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

Continued from Page 18

Past champion Rory Sabbatini, William McGirt and Jamie Donaldson of Wales were at 65. Zach Johnson was four

shots behind and thrilled about his 67. He hit two shots into the water on his way to a quadruple-bogey 8 on his second hole. The

former Masters champ followed with seven birdies to get back in the game. "It was a day where it could have gone the other way — quick," Johnson said. Phil Mickelson, playing PGA National for the first time since he was an amateur, had two birdies and a double bogey for a 70. Masters champion Adam Scott, in his first tournament in six weeks, opened with a 68. McIlroy has been shifting gears since late last year, which he closed out with a win at the Australian Open. He had chances to win in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and he played well in a second-round loss to Harris English last week at Match Play. But this looked like the Mc-

Ilroy who won two majors, each by eight shots, bobbing along the fairways and swinging with no fear. It helped to make a few putts, such as the 25-foot birdie on No. 2 and a 45-foot birdie putt on No. 11. He had a few par saves that kept him motoring along, such as the up-and-down from 40 yards at No. 9, making a putt from just outside 10 feet. Boy Wonder took off from there. He hit into 8 feet for birdie on the 493-yard 10th hole, made the long one at No. 11 and then stuffed a gap wedge into 6 feet on No. 12. "You can't fake it around here," McIlroy said. "You have to play well to shoot

good scores, and I was able to do that today." He still hasn't won a U.S. PGA Tour event since the BMW Championship at the end of the 2012 season. He hasn't won on the European Tour since Dubai at the end of that year to capture the money title on both sides of the Atlantic. But with every tournament, he's moving in the right direction. "I've reached a point now where I'm very comfortable with everything in my game and my swing," he said. "I'm seeing shots the way I want to see them. When I do that, I feel like the scores are just a byproduct of all the hard work and making good swings." □



# Federer, Djokovic to meet in Dubai semifinals



Roger Federer of Switzerland serves the ball to Lukas Rosol of the Czech Republic during a quarter final match of the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014.

Associated Press

SANDRA HARWITT

Associated Press

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)** — While top-seeded Novak Djokovic had a rest day when opponent Mikhail Youzhny became ill and withdrew from their quarterfinal on Thursday, Roger Federer had to play his way into their semifinal date at the Dubai Championships. The fourth-seeded Federer, who has won this title five times, won his 40th match at the Dubai Championships with a 6-2, 6-2 win over Lukas Rosol of the Czech Republic. Federer made a slow start, falling behind 2-0 but quickly rebounded by winning the next six games. In the second set, Federer broke serve in the third and

fifth games.

"When you play someone for the first time, you never quite know what his best level is or his normal level is," Federer said. "That's why you kind of keep pushing on, and that's also why I guess the score came out the way it did, because I never let go."

Federer holds a slim 16-15 winning record over Djokovic. The Serbian, however, has beaten Federer in their last three matches, and nine of their last 12 meetings.

"He is in the semis, he's already played two matches, he's been here long enough for preparing, and he's fit enough for anything anyway," Federer said of Djokovic having a quarterfinal walkover. "Every match you can get away from is a good one."

"For me, it was important also probably not to be out there for three hours. Then it would have been a disadvantage. But I think we're back on even terms for tomorrow."

The other semifinal will feature third-seeded Tomas Berdych against seventh-seeded Philipp Kohlschreiber of Germany.

Playing in his fourth quarterfinal of the season,

Kohlschreiber's 6-2, 6-3 win over Tunisian wild card Malik Jazirivictory was his 300th match-win on the ATP Tour. Berdych holds a 7-1 winning record over Kohlschreiber. "The record is one thing, but then always the match is going to start from zero," Berdych said. "I have seen Philipp play here and he's playing really well."

"He's playing very aggressive, very confident, too."

Berdych, who was a finalist last year, fought past fifth-seeded Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-4, 6-3.

Berdych was on a 10-match winning streak, which includes his win at the Rotterdam tournament two weeks ago.

The first set stayed on serve until Tsonga dropped his at love in the 10th game.

The second set was even more tightly contested. In the fifth game, Berdych faced four break points but held on. Tsonga surrendered his serve in the eighth game when he double-faulted on break point.

"It was very close," Berdych said. "I faced many break points which was very tough, but that was really the key of today's game, that I managed to save them." □



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# Clippers down Rockets as Thunder loses again

**OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)** — Kyrie Irving scored 14 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter to help the Cleveland Cavaliers beat Oklahoma City 114-104 Wednesday night, giving the Thunder their third straight loss since the All-Star break. NBA Capsules

Jarrett Jack scored 21 points, Spencer Hawes had 19 and Tristan Thompson added 11 points and 11 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Cleveland shot 14 for 21 from the field in the fourth quarter against the Western Conference-leading Thunder.

Kevin Durant had 28 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, Russell Westbrook had 24 points and nine assists, and Serge Ibaka added 16 points and 13 rebounds for the Thunder. Oklahoma City is 0-3 since Westbrook returned from his latest knee surgery.

**CLIPPERS 101, ROCKETS 93 LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Blake Griffin had 23 points and 16 rebounds and reserve Darren Collison scored seven of his 19 points in the final 2:09 to lift Los Angeles past Houston.

The Clippers won for the sixth time in eight games, converting 20 Houston turnovers into 30 points. DeAndre Jordan had 13 points and 10 rebounds for his 30th double-double. His previous career high was 12 last season.

Jamal Crawford, who had a season-high seven 3-pointers Monday night in a win at New Orleans, was 1 for 6 behind the arc against the Rockets and left the game for good with 13 seconds remaining in the first half because of a left calf strain. He had eight points in 15 minutes.

Dwight Howard had 23 points and 11 rebounds, and James Harden added 18 points for the Rockets.

**BULLS 103, WARRIORS 83**

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Taj Gibson scored 21 points, Carlos Boozer added 15 points and 13 rebounds, and Chicago used a big



Cleveland Cavaliers guard Kyrie Irving (2) drives as Oklahoma City Thunder guard Thabo Sefolosa (25) reaches for the ball during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014.

Associated Press

third-quarter run to win for the seventh time in eight games by pounding Golden State.

Jimmy Butler scored 16 points after missing two games with bruised ribs, Mike Dunleavy Jr. added 15, and Joakim Noah grabbed 17 rebounds for the Bulls.

They also dominated on the glass 56-41, forced 16 turnovers and held All-Star Stephen Curry in check while bringing Golden State's four-game win streak to an emphatic end. Jordan Crawford scored 16 points for the Warriors and David Lee came off the bench to get 11 points in 20 minutes after being hospitalized with a stomach flu and missing two games, but Curry tied a season low with five points on 2-of-10 shooting.

**MAVERICKS 108, PELICANS 89**

**DALLAS (AP)** — Dirk Nowitzki shook off an early shoulder issue to finish with 18 points in Dallas' victory and New Orleans All-Star Anthony Davis was knocked out of the game with a similar problem.

Nowitzki went to the locker room 31 seconds into the

game holding his left shoulder but emerged a short time later and returned to the game. He even had a spin move and finished with a left-handed finger roll in the first half.

Davis, the Pelicans' leading scorer and rebounder, was holding his sprained left shoulder on his way to play defense and didn't return after leaving the game during a New Orleans timeout with 4:13 left in the first half.

The Mavericks (36-23) are a season-high 13 games over .500 after their fourth straight win, and the Pelicans stayed winless since the All-Star break at 0-5.

Eric Gordon led New Orleans with 19 points, and Brian Roberts had 17.

Monta Ellis led Dallas with 23 points, seven assists and four steals, while Vince Carter scored 17.

**TRAIL BLAZERS 124, NETS 80**

**PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)** — Will Barton had a season-high 20 points and career-high 11 rebounds, providing a spark off the bench for short-handed Portland in its rout of Brooklyn.

The Blazers won their fourth straight game despite missing forward LaMarcus

Aldridge. The team's top scorer and rebounder has been out five games with a left groin sprain.

Jason Collins, who became the NBA's first openly gay player when he signed a 10-day contract with the Nets on Sunday, entered the game without fan reaction and played a pair of scoreless stretches in the fourth quarter.

Mo Williams scored 21 points and Nicolas Batum had 19 to lead seven Portland players in double figures.

Deron Williams had 12 points for the Nets, who had their lowest point total this season.

**SPURS 120, PISTONS 110**

**SAN ANTONIO (AP)** — Marco Belinelli had 20 points to lead eight San Antonio players in double figures, and the Spurs worked through a lethargic start to beat Detroit.

Kawhi Leonard had 15 points in his return from a 14-game absence due to a broken finger. Manu Ginobili scored 16 points, Tim Duncan and Tiago Splitter had 13 apiece, Boris Diaw added 12, Patty Mills 11 and Cory Joseph 10.

Josh Smith scored 24 points

for Detroit, which has lost three straight. Will Bynum added 18 points, Rodney Stuckey 17 and Andre Drummond had 16 points and 17 rebounds.

San Antonio got off to a sloppy start despite having two practices during a five-day break following its annual Rodeo Road Trip that lasted nearly a month.

**JAZZ 109, SUNS 86**

**SALT LAKE CITY (AP)** — Gordon Hayward had 17 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists to lead a balanced offense and Utah cruised to victory over slumping Phoenix.

Richard Jefferson scored 17 points, Diante Garrett had a career-high 15 and the Jazz had seven players in double figures.

The Jazz shot 57.5 percent from the field, the highest mark of any Phoenix opponent this season.

Gerald Green had 17 points and rookie Archie Goodwin matched his career-best with 16 for the Suns.

Playing their only road game in a nine-game stretch, the Suns have been looking to improve their playoff position.

However, with a third straight loss, Phoenix leads Memphis by just one-half game for the eighth and final Western Conference berth.

**GRIZZLIES 108, LAKERS 103**

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)** — Courtney Lee scored 18 points, Marc Gasol had 14 points and 12 rebounds, and Memphis weathered Los Angeles' late 3-point shooting display.

Tony Allen added 17 points, James Johnson 14 and Zach Randolph 13 for Memphis.

Jodie Meeks led the Lakers with 19 points, Wesley Johnson added 18 and Pau Gasol had 17 points and 10 rebounds.

The Lakers were 7 of 11 on 3-pointers in the fourth quarter and Jordan Farmar's 3 from 29 feet with about 15 seconds left pulled Los Angeles to 106-103. However, Lee's two free throws closed the scoring. □



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## Review: Lots of innovations beyond iOS and Android

**ANICK JESDANUN****AP Technology Writer****BARCELONA, Spain (AP)**

— The “1 percent” is often used to disparage the American elites at the very top of the wealth scale. When it comes to smartphones, however, the “1 percent” is the bottom of the heap.

Research firm Gartner says 94 percent of smartphones sales last year were either iPhones or Android devices. Windows Phone and BlackBerry devices made up another 5 percent combined.

What about the remaining 1 percent? They are the wannabes such as Firefox and Sailfish.

I had a chance to try out some of these little-known systems at the Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Spain, this week. Many of them aren't even available in the U.S., where I live. Although I don't see myself replacing my Samsung Android phone even if I could, some of these alternative phones have features I envy.

— Firefox OS, from Mozilla Firefox is better known for its Web browser. Now, the people behind it are trying to adapt it to run smartphones targeted at emerging markets. Firefox OS was launched last summer with three phones, priced around \$50 to \$70. They are available in 15 countries, but not in the U.S.

At the Barcelona show, Mozilla unveiled plans to expand to additional markets in Latin America and eastern Europe, while ZTE announced two new models. Chipmaker Spreadtrum Communications Inc. also announced a blueprint for any phone

maker to make \$25 smartphones using Firefox OS.

The home screen and icons resemble what's found on iPhones and Android.

Where Firefox OS starts to differ is in apps. With iPhones and Android, you go to an app store to get new apps. With Firefox OS, you typically have instant access to all apps, the same way you can visit a website for the

— Sailfish OS, from Jolla Sailfish is based on the Linux operating system and comes from the Finnish company Jolla (pronounced “yolla”). Former Nokia employees created Jolla after that struggling cellphone maker abandoned an in-house operating system in favor of Microsoft's Windows Phone.

There's only one phone

nine large rectangles, similar to an elongated tic-tac-toe board. These are filled with up to nine of your open apps, so you can instantly get to any one.

You can tap to open an app, but what's neat is you can reach a task directly by pressing gently on the rectangle and dragging your finger. For the mail app, drag from the left to create a mes-

written for Sailfish yet, but Sailfish phones have a special tool for running most Android apps. You won't get some of the gesture functions, though.

— Ubuntu, from Canonical

Like Sailfish, Ubuntu is based on Linux. Unlike Sailfish, there aren't any Ubuntu phones yet. But the company behind it announced partnerships with two phone makers last week. Phones are due to come out this year, likely to European and Asian markets first.

Ubuntu's home page has a series of so-called scopes, arranged by category. One video scope might consist of icons for movies on your phone. Another might have items in your Netflix queue. You can refine what's presented through a universal search. The idea is to let you access content easily, without having to open an app first.

Swipe from the left edge to get a launcher. The top has all your open apps, while your favorite apps are underneath those. There's also a home screen scope to search for installed apps and those in the app store.

Swipe from the right edge to get your most recently used app. Swipe further for a carousel of all open apps. Just pick one to go straight to it.

These systems all have good innovations to help users, but people will find the phone and app selections quite limiting. Sailfish has potential if it can run well on existing Android phones, while Android apps can run on it. I look forward to trying that out when it's released in the first half of the year. □



A device is running with Firefox OS software during the Mobile World Congress, the world's largest mobile phone trade show in Barcelona, Spain, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014.

**Associated Press**

first time without installing anything.

The catch is you need an Internet connection to use apps that aren't on your phone, but many apps need that access anyway to refresh news, social networks or restaurant guides.

Firefox OS also has a universal search for all content on the phone and online.

There's another neat feature coming to Firefox OS. Swipe from the left side of the screen to flip through recent apps one by one, just like hitting the back button on a Web browser.

out so far, and it's sold only in Europe for 399 euros (\$546). But Jolla has ambitions to reach Russia and Asia and to partner with other phone makers. Jolla Ltd. also announced last week that it will release a free app that Android users can install to replace the regular Android interface with Sailfish's.

I can see getting the hang of Sailfish over time. It emphasizes gestures over tapping. You can access many functions by swiping from an edge on the screen.

The home screen has

sage, or drag from the right to refresh messages. For the phone app, drag from the left to get the dialer, or drag from the right to get your list of contacts.

This saves time once you get used to the gestures. To close an app, you can swipe down from the top edge like a window shade. If you're already on the home screen, swipe down to lock the phone.

Apple introduced similar gesture controls with its iOS 7 update last fall, but Sailfish goes much further. There aren't many apps



## Orders for US durable goods fell 1% in January

**JOSH BOAK**

**AP Economics Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—American businesses ordered fewer durable manufactured goods in January, cutting demand for planes, autos and machines. But a key category that reflects business investment rebounded on the strength of demand for electronics and fabricated metals.

The Commerce Department said Thursday that orders for durable goods fell a seasonally adjusted 1 percent in January from December. Much of the decline was driven by a 20.2 percent drop in demand for commercial aircraft, a volatile month-to-month category. Orders for all transportation-related equipment fell 5.6 percent. More encouragingly, orders rose 1.7 percent in a closely watched category,

known as core capital goods, which excludes volatile transportation and defense orders. This category had dropped 1.8 percent in December.

Economists track this category to determine whether business investment is expanding. Last month's rebound nearly erased all of December's decline, a sign that companies might be anticipating more business during spring.

"There is some evidence that the growth rate of equipment investment is strengthening," said Paul Ashworth, chief U.S. economist at Capital Economics. But "we won't know for sure until the weather improves." Frigid weather and snowstorms have cut into factory output in recent months. As manufacturing has slowed, the effects have echoed across

the economy to dampen hiring, retail demand and home sales.

Manufacturers made fewer cars and trucks, appliances, furniture and carpeting in January, as cold weather delayed shipments of raw materials and caused some factories to shut down, the Federal Reserve has reported. Factory production plummeted 0.8 percent last month, ending five straight months of gains. The Institute for Supply Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, said its index of manufacturing activity fell to 51.3 in January, from 56.5 in December. It was the lowest reading since May, though any reading above 50 signals growth in manufacturing. The broad slowdown emerged after the economy had picked up momentum during the

final half of 2013. Retail sales tumbled last month, including a 2.1 percent dip in auto purchases. Sales of existing U.S. homes plummeted in January to the slowest pace in 18 months, according to the National Association of Realtors. Most economists say the economy will pivot to stronger growth this year after a halting recovery that followed the recession's end in June 2009. Many analysts are forecasting the economy will grow by around 3 percent in 2014, an increase of more than a percentage point for 2013. Much of the hope for a better 2014 reflects a belief that the federal government will be less of a drag this year. In 2013, higher taxes and across-the-board spending cuts trimmed about 1.5 percentage points from growth. □

## EBay founder defends plan to retain PayPal

**NEW YORK (AP)** — EBay's founder Pierre Omidyar on Thursday said billionaire investor Carl Icahn's claims that the company is not operating in the best manner for shareholders aren't merited. In three letters to shareholders over three days, Icahn has urged the company to split off its PayPal unit, which is the fastest growing unit of the e-commerce company and accounts for about 40 percent of its revenue. Icahn has also leveled attacks at two directors and company CEO John Donahoe. In his latest letter, Icahn said responses to his letters from "eBay's public relations machines" aren't sticking to the facts.

On Thursday, founder and chairman Omidyar said Icahn is making unsubstantiated claims about the company and "deliberately impugning the integrity of our directors." He said the idea of splitting off PayPal is not a new one and that eBay has considered it and decided against it in the past. "After diligent consideration, we believe that PayPal and eBay are better together," Omidyar said. "In the future, if we determine that's no longer true, we will act accordingly and in the best interests of shareholders and the company."

EBay bought PayPal for \$1.3 billion in late 2002. Recently, PayPal has been expanding into brick-and-mortar stores from serving solely as an online payments service.

In January, EBay said Icahn had taken a less than 1 percent stake in the company and said he was seeking a non-binding shareholder resolution to spin off PayPal. At the time Icahn also nominated two of his employees for eBay's board. EBay said then that it had looked into a split from PayPal, but felt it wasn't the best move for shareholders. But it said it will review Icahn's nominees.

Shares of eBay rose \$1.11, or nearly 2 percent, to \$58.45 in midday trading. □

## S&P 500 index closes at a record high

**STEVE ROTHWELL**

**AP Markets Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — After knocking on the door all week, the stock market logged a record on Thursday.

strong earnings reported by a number of U.S. companies including the drug-maker Mylan and several retailers.

The stock market has staged an impressive turn-

that the Federal Reserve will keep supporting the economy have helped support demand for stocks. "In the last few days we've flirted with it, and now we've got the new high,"

said. March has been the third-strongest month over the last 30 years, with an average gain of 1.4 percent, according to the Stock Traders' Almanac. "It bodes well for equities for the next couple of months, at least," said Detrick. The S&P 500 rose 9.13 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,854.29. Its previous record high close was 1,848.38, set on Jan. 15.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 74.24, or 0.5 percent, to 16,272.65. The Dow is still about 1.8 percent below its record close of 16,576.66. The Nasdaq composite climbed 26.87 points, or 0.6 percent, to 4,318.93.

The Nasdaq is also short of its record close of 5,048.62 set in March 2000.

On Thursday, generic drug-maker Mylan led the S&P 500 index higher after reporting an 11 percent increase in fourth-quarter earnings, beating analysts' expectations despite higher expenses. Mylan's stock climbed \$4.85, or 9.4 percent, to \$56.27.

Stocks also got a lift from a range of retailers that reported strong earnings. □



**Trader Christopher Forbes, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. After knocking on the door all week, the stock market logged a record on Thursday.**

**(AP Photo/Richard Drew)**

The Standard & Poor's 500 index had moved above its previous all-time high on numerous occasions this week, only to fade in afternoon trading. On Thursday, the index stayed higher after getting a boost from

around in February, after slumping at the start of the year on concerns about the prospects for growth in China and worries about the health of the U.S. economy. Growth in corporate earnings and optimism

said Ryan Detrick, a senior technical strategist at Schaeffer's Investment Research.

The timing of the new record, just before the start of spring, could help the market extend its gains, Detrick



# Bad weather puts the chill on several companies

The Associated Press (AP) - Storms outside can freeze up economic growth. Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen says the central bank will be watching to see if a recent slowdown in consumer spending and job growth is part of a broader trend or a temporary situation caused by this winter's severe weather.

Just like frozen pipes can slow the flow of water, cold weather and storms can keep shoppers at home and cramp their spending.

A number of companies have blamed this season's snow and freezing temperatures for putting the ice on their own sales:

— Wal-Mart Stores Inc. closed more than 200 of its stores during its fourth quarter. Its profit fell 21 percent and it gave a subdued forecast for the year.

Other factors, such as food stamp cuts, are hurting its business.

— Macy's Inc. also closed stores because of winter storms. At one point during January, about 30 percent

of its Macy's and Bloomingdale's stores were shut.

Macy's said business remained sluggish until Valentine's Day but hopes sales will bounce back in the spring.

— Toll Brothers Inc. said that freezing, snowy weather in January and February is weighing on its business in the U.S. Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Midwest, which make up about half of the homebuilder's market. The company said this was one of the worst winters it's seen and expects delays and

added costs. But it is optimistic home sales will rebound in the spring.

— Home Depot Inc. estimated that it lost \$100 million in the month of January because of bad weather. The home improvement retailer has benefited from a recovering housing market but a slowdown in November and December has hampered its business.

— McDonald's Corp.'s sales at established U.S. stores fell 3.3 percent in January, hurt by bad weather.

— Whole Foods Market

Inc. said bad weather had shoppers making fewer trips to its stores, slowing its sales growth in the quarter that ended in January. It remains optimistic about its future sales trends.

— Columbia Sportswear Co. was one of the rare companies that benefited from a cold winter. The seller of Columbia jackets, Sorel boots and Mountain Hardwear sleeping bags said revenue rose 6 percent in its latest quarter after being hurt by mild winters in the past two years. □

# Mortgage giant Freddie Mac posts \$8.6B profit in 4Q

**MARCY GORDON**  
**AP Business Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Mortgage giant Freddie Mac posted net income of \$8.6 billion for the October through December period, its ninth straight profitable quarter. Earnings were boosted by the continued rise in home prices, which reduced the amounts the company had to set aside to cover losses on mortgages.

Freddie's fourth-quarter profit reported Thursday nearly doubled from earnings of \$4.5 billion in the last three months of 2012.

McLean, Virginia-based Freddie said it will pay a dividend of \$10.4 billion to the U.S. Treasury next month. Freddie already had repaid its full government bailout of \$71.3 billion after paying its third-quarter dividend.

The government rescued Freddie and larger sibling Fannie Mae at the height of the financial crisis in September 2008. Together the companies received taxpayer aid totaling \$187 billion. Freddie said its full-year profit of \$48.7 billion for 2013 benefited from the increase in home prices as well as the company having capitalized on the tax benefits of the sour loans it absorbed during the crisis. By applying the tax credits it had saved from its losses on delinquent loans in the third quarter, Freddie reduced what it owed the government and boosted its bottom line by \$23.3 billion for 2013.

The 2013 earnings rose sharply from \$11 billion in 2012.

However, Freddie said Thursday that its recent strong level of earnings "is



**A "Sold" sign is posted outside a home in Indianapolis. Mortgage giant Freddie Mac posted net income of \$8.6 billion for the October through December period, its ninth straight profitable quarter.**

(AP Photo/Michael Conroy)

not sustainable over the long term" because the rise in home prices has begun to slow and the use of its tax benefits was an un-

usual event. Freddie also gained billions of dollars last year from a number of settlements with major banks over soured mort-

gage securities it bought from them before the crisis. As the housing market has gradually recovered and made Fannie and Freddie profitable again, they have repaid their government loans as dividends each quarter. Those repayments have helped make last year's federal budget deficit the smallest in five years. Under a federal policy, Fannie and Freddie must turn over their entire net worth above \$2.4 billion in each quarter to the Treasury. Freddie said its net worth in the fourth quarter was \$12.8 billion.

Washington-based Fannie reported last week that it earned \$6.5 billion in the fourth quarter, its eighth straight profitable quarter. Fannie will have repaid its full government bailout of \$116 billion after paying its fourth-quarter dividend. □

# Once world's largest bank, RBS beats a retreat

**DANICA KIRKA**  
**Associated Press**

**LONDON (AP)** — Royal Bank of Scotland was once the biggest bank in the world. Now it's not even the biggest in Britain. And it is about to get smaller still. RBS was saved in 2008 by a 45 billion-pound (about \$80 billion at the time) government rescue after its move to become the world's largest bank through a massive debt-fueled acquisition backfired. The bailout left the British government with

an 81 percent stake — and mounting losses.

On Thursday, after reporting another whopping loss — 9 billion pounds (\$15 billion) for 2013 — RBS said it would stop trying to be a world player and cut its losses. Amid pressure from the government, Chief Executive Ross McEwan unveiled plans to reduce its global presence and to make operations less risky.

"Let me spell it out very clearly: the days when RBS

sought to be the biggest bank in the world — those days are well and truly over," said McEwan, who became CEO in October. "Our ambition is to be a bank for U.K. customers." McEwan pledged to make the bank "smaller, simpler and smarter," shrinking it from seven divisions to three. British media have reported that it would lose as much as one-quarter of its 120,000-strong workforce, some of which is likely to come from the sale of

businesses.

RBS plans to sell shares in Rhode Island-based Citizens Bank, which employs about 18,500 people. And it will further shrink its investment arm, which is already two-thirds smaller than before the crisis.

"It's a watershed moment," said Iain Martin, author of "Making It Happen: Fred Goodwin, RBS and the Men Who Blew Up the British Economy."

"It's the end of RBS' global dream."

Once a provincial institution, RBS became a global bank after former CEO Fred Goodwin spearheaded a string of purchases, including of Dutch lender ABN Amro, which ballooned its balance sheet to as much as 2.2 trillion pounds on the eve of the crisis, bigger than the U.K. economy. Among the many acquisitions was Coutts, banker to the Royal Family and an institution that traces its history to the patronage of Queen Anne in 1708. □



**Mutts**



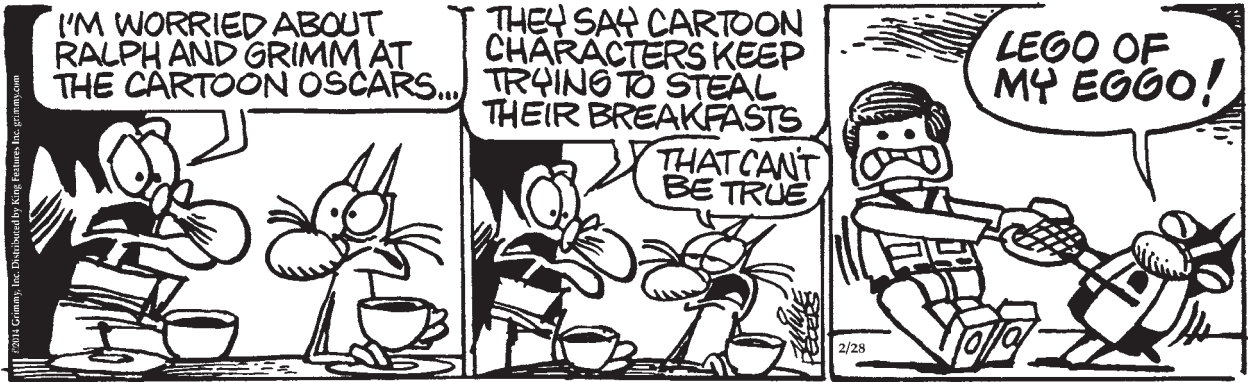
**6 Chix**



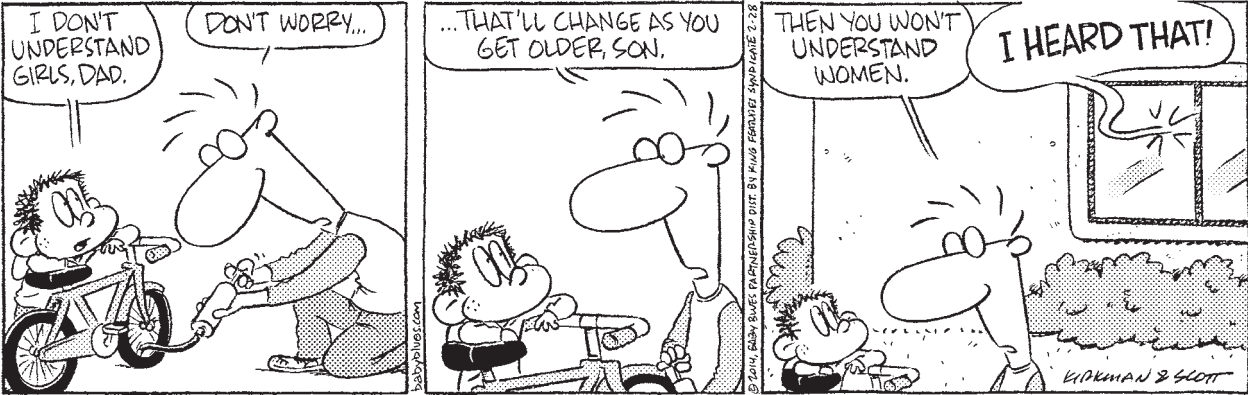
**Blondie**



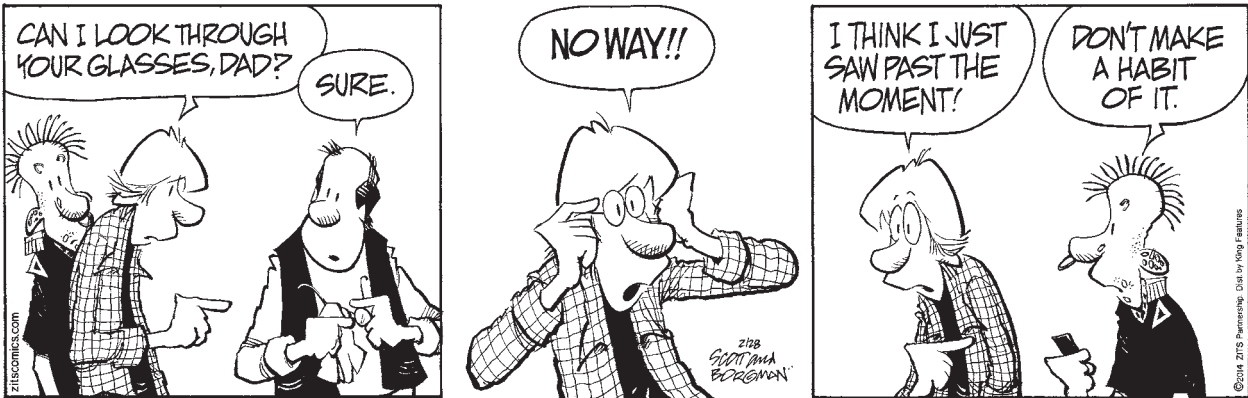
**Mother Goose & Grimm**



**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

7				1			
		3		2	6		8
1		4					
9				4		2	7
8	3		5				6
					6		3
	5		1	9	4		
			3				1

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 2/28

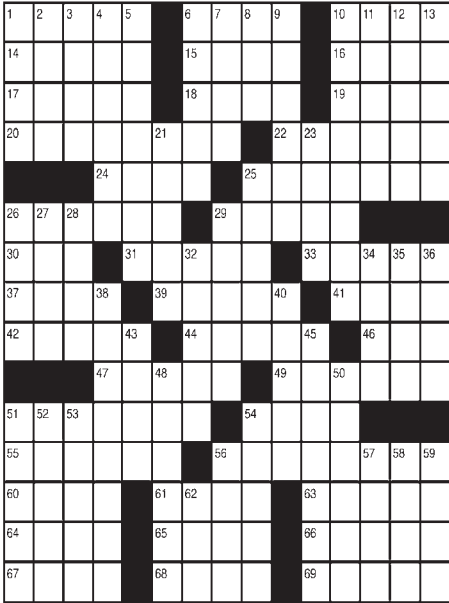
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

9	6	2	1	8	7	5	3	4
5	1	7	4	9	3	2	8	6
8	4	3	2	6	5	1	9	7
2	3	1	7	5	6	8	4	9
6	9	4	8	2	1	3	7	5
7	5	8	3	4	9	6	2	1
4	2	5	6	7	8	9	1	3
3	8	9	5	1	4	7	6	2
1	7	6	9	3	2	4	5	8

**ACROSS**

- 1 Winslet and Mulgrew
- 6 Close a door angrily
- 10 Meanie
- 14 Nation called "The Boot"
- 15 Back of the neck
- 16 Caramel-topped custard
- 17 Beauty spots
- 18 Floored
- 19 Helvetica or Times New Roman
- 20 Ghosts
- 22 Cold period in history
- 24 TV's "To \_ the Truth"
- 25 Walk leisurely
- 26 Watery part of the blood
- 29 Possessed
- 30 Popular dog breed, for short
- 31 Took illegally
- 33 Sunflower \_; healthy snack
- 37 Finished; done
- 39 Large sea duck
- 41 "Phooey!"
- 42 One who walks along the shore
- 44 Ease; relax
- 46 African antelope
- 47 Crouch in fear
- 49 Lament
- 51 Fall month
- 54 Parisian papa
- 55 Chauffeur
- 56 Unsuitable pair
- 60 University of Notre \_
- 61 Book assigned in a literature course, often
- 63 Boise's state
- 64 At any time
- 65 Actor Nolte
- 66 Poison
- 67 Cincinnati team
- 68 Trevino's pegs
- 69 Pigs



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 2/28/14

**Thursday's Puzzle Solved**

**DOWN**

- 1 Delaney and Kardashian
- 2 Sitting on
- 3 Saga
- 4 Selects by vote
- 5 "All \_ go!"
- 6 Get tangled
- 7 Rules
- 8 Make fun of
- 9 Highway's dividing strip
- 10 Insulted
- 11 Rub it in
- 12 Stove
- 13 Go in
- 21 Gladden
- 23 Hints to actors
- 25 Sugary
- 26 Farm vehicle
- 27 Etna's output
- 28 Not up yet
- 29 More ancient
- 32 Refueling ship
- 34 Consequently
- 35 Carvey or Plato
- 36 Astonish
- 38 Gets well

I	N	N	A	B	Y	S	S	P	H	I	L
R	E	I	N	S	L	O	P	E	R	O	B
A	X	L	E	S	U	G	A	R	O	M	I
		T	E	R	M	I	N	A	T	E	M
			V	A	S	T		N	A	P	
A	D	R	O	I	T		W	H	I	S	T
F	R	E	U	D		S	O	U	T	H	E
T	A	B	S		T	O	M	M	Y		E
E	M	U		M	O	L	E	S	C	E	N
R	A	T	T	E	D	O	N		R	E	S
			O	L	D			V	E	N	T
P	I	T	A		L	E	G	E	N	D	A
O	A	R	S		E	X	E	R	T	S	O
K	N	I	T		R	I	N	S	E	Y	O
E	S	P	Y		S	T	E	E	D	F	D

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- 40 Bumpkins
- 43 Royal vestment
- 45 Allows
- 48 "If it \_ for bad luck, I wouldn't have any luck at all"
- 50 Grassy area
- 51 More bizarre
- 52 Desire strongly
- 53 Like a three-minute egg
- 54 Chooses
- 56 Small rodents
- 57 Hired vehicle
- 58 Goatee's place
- 59 Sharpen
- 62 Dessert choice



# Classifieds

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**Aruba Beach Club**  
wks 8,9 &10  
pool side & ocean view  
\$9,000 per wk will Discount  
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201428

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a.breeze@arubadirectdeals.com

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pool & ocean weeks 4 & 5  
\$18.000 each / \$35.000 for  
both.  
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ocean /pool view  
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\$11,200  
week 9 -3303-37 weeks  
\$17,999  
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optymed@optonline.net

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sun.  
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508-651-0016

202289

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**Paradise Beach Villas**  
weeks 9 &10 1 bdrm , sleeps 4  
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\$8000/wk  
or Rent 2015  
\$1100/wk.  
1-(506) 363-4530  
jrcheev@gmail.com

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## FOR SALE

**Condo in Gold Coast**  
Every thing's included in this  
2 br / 2 ½ bath unit check in out  
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or call 562-0735 free pick up

201409

## FOR SALE BY OWNER

**Dutch Village**  
pool side 2 floor timeshare.  
Week 9, Old contract, 16 weeks  
remaining 2br/2bath upstairs.  
Full kitchen, ½ bath lr/ dr  
downstairs. Close to beach 1 Br  
can be separated.  
As studio/ efficiency. Call Bob at  
845 430-8864 or e-mail  
bob@blackdiamondlimos.com

201404

## FOR SALE

**Casa del Mar / (deeded)**  
**Presidential Suits**  
Weeks 7 & 8 Suit 1303  
2 bedr ocean /pool view  
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p/week  
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phone: USA 440-428-4631

202104

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results. Call 740-5171

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wk 9 sa-sa \$6.500  
wk 10 su-su \$7.000  
wk 11 su-su \$7.000  
[sales@arubadirectdeals.com](mailto:sales@arubadirectdeals.com)  
732-2788

201407

## FOR SALE

**Dutch Village**  
week 8 ground floor  
19 weeks non mandatory  
Call Room 53  
[burtanaronson@gmail.com](mailto:burtanaronson@gmail.com)  
After Feb.25

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**Divi Phoenix Waterfront Villa**  
week 8 ocean front  
2 bdr 3 baths sleeps 8 Unit  
821can be used as week 7&8 or  
8&9 sat-sat  
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e-mail:jwhelan@mstct.com

201432

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**Caribbean Palm Village**  
**(deeded)**  
weeks 6-7-8-9  
1st floor pool side  
2 bedroom & 2 baths  
USA 401-641-7888  
[anthony@colettas.com](mailto:anthony@colettas.com)  
011297-5689389  
starting at \$5,000.00  
Units D103 C103

201425

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Dr. Esschendal

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POLIS	581-1100
ORANJESTAD	582-4000
NOORD	587-0009
STA. CRUZ	585-4710
SAVANETA	584-7000
SAN NICOLAS	584-5000
FIRE DEPT.	115
FIRE DEPT.	582-1108
POLIS TIPLINE	11141
HOSPITAL	527-4000
AMBULANCE	582-1234
SAN NICOLAS	
AMBULANCE	584-5050

## PHARMACY

O'STAD: del Pueblo Tel: 582-1253  
S. NICOLAS: San Nicolas Tel: 584-5712

INFORMATION	118
SETAR	582-2116
TAXI	582-5900
TAXI-TAS	587-5900
PROF. TAXI	588-0035
TAXI D.T.S.	587-2300
SERVICE ARUBA	583-3232

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American Airline	582-2700
Avianca	588-0059
Dutch Antilles	588-1900
Insel Air	588-9314
Jet Blue	588-2244
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## FUNDACION

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Diabetic Foundation  
Arubano

Tel: 583-3808  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Tel: 583-8989

Foundation Amor  
pa Prohimo  
Tel: 583-3345 /586-6976

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Tel: 583-5400

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Website: [www.arubaqualityapartments.com](http://www.arubaqualityapartments.com)  
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\*Kitchen / Airco / Cable TV \*Swimming Pool  
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Map showing location of TODAY BONDIA in downtown Aruba, near the bus terminal and L.G. Smith Boulevard.



# NASA could have prevented spacewalker's close call

MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida

(AP) — NASA could have

prevented last summer's near-drowning of a spacewalking astronaut at the International Space Station, an investigation panel concluded Wednesday. Italian astronaut Luca Parmitano's helmet filled with water July 16 during his second spacewalk in a week. He barely made it back inside alive.

But according to the panel's report, his helmet also had leaked at the end of his first spacewalk a week earlier. The panel said the space station team misdiagnosed the first failure and should have delayed the second spacewalk until the problem was understood.

"This event was not properly investigated," said Chris Hansen, NASA's chief space station engineer and chairman of the investigation board created by the space agency after the close call.

"There was a lack of understanding in the severity of the event," Hansen said during a news conference. Space station officials — even the astronauts themselves — presumed the leak was from a water drink bag in the suit when, in fact, that was not the culprit, he noted.

Investigators said Parmitano's "calm demeanor" during the incident quite possibly saved his life. It was fortunate he was relatively close to the space station entrance when the helmet flooded, Hansen noted.

Now 37, Parmitano is a former test pilot and an officer in the Italian Air Force who was making his first space mission. He returned to Earth in November.

The precise cause of the



In this Tuesday, July 16, 2013 image from video made available by NASA, astronaut Karen Nyberg assists astronaut Luca Parmitano remove his space suit after an aborted spacewalk aboard the International Space Station. Associated Press

water leakage is still under review.

Debris clogged a pump mechanism inside Parmitano's spacesuit, part of its cooling system, and water ended up in the helmet, Hansen noted. Engineers do not yet know the source of the aluminum silicate contamination.

NASA almost ended up with another disaster following Parmitano's close call. The day after his near-drowning, the astronauts used a vacuum cleaner to dry the spacesuit and accidentally sucked oxygen out of a tank. "The hazardous mix of electricity and pure O<sub>2</sub>" could have sparked a fire, the report stated.

Mission Control had aborted the spacewalk once the water began to rise to alarming levels in Parmitano's helmet; the spacewalk by Parmitano and American astronaut Chris Cassidy lasted 1½ hours, versus the anticipated six hours.

So much water filled Parmitano's helmet — an estimated 1½ liters — that he could barely see and

could not hear or speak. He said he made his way back into the space station by relying on the position of his safety tether.

NASA was contrite following the release of the 222-page report, saying it could and would do better.

"We're taking it very seriously," said space station program manager Mike Suffredini.

He expects the engineering investigation wraps up by year's end.

Bill Gerstenmaier, head of NASA's human exploration and operations mission, said the spacewalk probably should have ended sooner on July 16.

"We can all improve and do better," Gerstenmaier said.

The spacesuit failure — an unexpected problem initially given short shrift — has overtones of the 1986 Challenger and 2003 Columbia disasters. Both shuttle accidents were caused by misunderstood technical problems and miscommunication. In all, 14 astronauts died.

Gerstenmaier stressed that Parmitano's close call is "an excellent reminder for us."

"The message to all of us is to be really vigilant, right, and to really communicate," he told reporters.

"I think it's a tribute to the agency that we're not hiding this stuff, that we're actually out trying to describe these things, describe where we can get better. That's how we prevent Columbias and Challengers."

A former NASA associate administrator said the incident is an all too familiar problem: Engineers think

they know everything that can go wrong with complicated technology and often don't.

"When things go wrong, the machinery is talking to you. The equipment is trying to tell you something," said Scott Pace, space policy director at George Washington University. "The question is whether or not you are listening."

U.S. spacewalks were put on hold after the incident. An exception was made right before Christmas so two U.S. astronauts could repair a crippled cooling system at the orbiting outpost. As a precaution, they had makeshift snorkels and water-absorbent pads in their helmets, but there were no problems.

A series of NASA-led spacewalks tentatively are scheduled for July or August, but the agency wants to know exactly what caused the helmet flooding before carrying them out, Suffredini said. The age of the shuttle-era spacesuits is not thought to be a contributor.

Six men currently reside on the space station: three Russians, two Americans and one Japanese. □

## Science academies explain global warming reality

SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Man-

made global warming is worsening and will disrupt both the natural world and human society, warns a joint report of two of the world's leading scientific organizations. The U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society, which is the national scientific academy of the United Kingdom, are releasing an unusual plain language report on climate change that addressed 20 issues in a question-and-answer format. "People do have persistent questions all about climate change," said study author Ben Santer of the Lawrence Livermore National Lab in California. "This is a one-stop shop for

many of those questions."

The report, released on Thursday, addresses new issues such as the recent slowing in the increase of world temperatures and how heat-trapping gases are connected to extreme weather. Increases in extreme weather, melting glaciers, rising seas and oceans getting more acidic are already happening, the 36-page report said.

And those changes "are expected to increase greater warming and will threaten food production, freshwater supplies, coastal infrastructure and especially the welfare of the huge population currently living in low-lying areas," the report said.

The report said that while the rate of warming is slow-

er in the 2000s than it was in the 1990s it doesn't negate the 150 years of observations that show the world is warming. The report also says that more the 90 percent of the heat trapped by greenhouse gases lately has been absorbed into the oceans' deep water, which for a while slows surface warming but not the long-term trend.

There is enough evidence on the science to warrant action, Sir Paul Nurse, president of the Royal Society, said in a news release.

"We've changed the chemical composition of the atmosphere; that's not a belief system. We know that beyond shadow of a doubt," Santer said in an interview. "We ignore this at our peril." □

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# Oscars: How we ended up with 9 best picture noms

**RYAN NAKASHIMA**

**AP Business Writer**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Was it Lee Daniels' "The Butler," the folk rock bio pic "Inside Llewyn Davis," or Woody Allen's "Blue Jasmine"? We'll never know which film might have been the 10th best picture nominee at this year's Oscars.

Ahead of Hollywood's biggest night on Sunday, moviegoers may wonder why there have been only nine nominees for best picture the last three years — even though the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' rules allow for up to 10.

It's all part of a magic, complicated formula intended to choose the year's best films, introduce an element of surprise, and minimize voters' incentive to vote strategically, according to Rick Rosas, a PricewaterhouseCoopers partner who supervises the count.

It allows for fewer nominees in years when support is weak for certain films. Movies that make the cut need a hard-core group of supporters as well as broad acceptance by voters who

would rank it their second- or third-best choice of the year.

"We want voters to be able to fully vote their conscience," Rosas says, "not to worry, 'My vote won't matter for a particular film.'"

Here's how the best-picture nomination process works. But we must also issue a spoiler alert: Stop reading now if you would rather not spoil the fun of the Oscars by trying to figure out one of the most complicated formulas devised by man.

Still with us? Good luck.

The Academy's 6,000 members are sent ballots and asked to rank their five favorite films of the year.

Let's say "Voter Jane" really loved "12 Years a Slave" but also thought "American Hustle," "Philomena," "Gravity," and "Nebraska" deserved runner-up status. She'd mark her ballot ranking "12 Years" as No. 1, "American Hustle" No. 2 and so on.

Here's where the ballot counters come in.

All the films are ranked according to how many first-



Preparations begin for the 86th Academy Awards, on Monday, Feb. 24, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

place votes they received. Any that get over 9.1 percent of the first-place votes are automatically nominated. That ensures that no more than 10 nominees automatically make the cut. If 10 make it, then the counting is done.

If there are fewer than 10, the ballot counters look for so-called surplus votes. Any film that receives votes

at least 10 percent above the 9.1-percent automatic nomination threshold will have the surplus votes re-allocated according to the voter's second choice — or third choice if the second choice is already nominated.

Each first-place vote for that popular film is given a lesser weight so the film barely crosses the threshold, and that ballot's second-place votes help another film, to a lesser degree.

So if "12 Years a Slave" received 10 percent of the votes, all of its first-place votes are counted with a weight of roughly 0.9 votes, and all of the second-place votes on the same ballot are redistributed to those films (like "American Hustle") with a weight of roughly 0.1 votes.

Another check is done to see if any films cross the 9.1 percent threshold.

Next, films with less than 1 percent of the first-place votes are eliminated and those ballots are reallocated according to the voter's second choice — or third choice if the second is already nominated.

Finally, all films with more than 5 percent of the votes are automatically nominated. If there are between five and 10, the counting is done. If there are more

than 10, the films with the fewest votes are eliminated and their next-choice votes are redistributed until only 10 remain. If there are less than five, the counters start over and eliminate from the least vote-getters up, while redistributing voters' next-choice votes until only five remain.

So those second- and third-place choices really matter, even if a voter's first-place selection is extremely popular.

Still with us? The actual balloting for best picture — completed this past Tuesday — is far less complicated:

All voters are again asked to rank the nominees in order of preference — this year, that means from 1 to 9.

If any film gets 50 percent of the first-place votes plus one, it wins. If not, the films with the fewest first-place votes are eliminated and those ballots are redistributed according to the voter's second-, third- and fourth-place choices accordingly. Either way, a film needs a lot of first-place votes from passionate backers, and a healthy standing as a second- and third-place pick in order to win.

But as you can see, it really is an honor just to be nominated. □

## Ahead of Oscars, Pharrell hits No. 1 with 'Happy'

**MESFIN FEKADU**

**AP Music Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Calling Pharrell's current state "happy" might be an understatement.

The producer-rapper-singer's tune "Happy" is nominated for best original song at Sunday's Oscars. Days ahead, the upbeat anthem has climbed to No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.

Pharrell says in an interview Wednesday he's "ever so grateful" and "it's pretty crazy."

The 40-year-old adds: "It's really awesome and I'm still shocked."

"Happy" is from the "Despicable Me 2" soundtrack and will appear on Phar-



In this Feb. 16, 2014 file photo, Pharrell Williams rehearses before the NBA All Star basketball game in New Orleans.

Associated Press

rell's new album, "GIRL," out Monday.

The hitmaker says he's prepping for his performance Sunday, and he "just intends to have fun with it."

Pharrell also topped the Hot 100 chart as a featured act on Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines," Snoop Dogg's "Drop It Like It's Hot" and Ludacris' "Money Maker." □



# Perry, Lee and Poitier feted at Essence event

**NEKESA MUMBI MOODY**

**AP Entertainment Writer**

**BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)** — "This is historic!" a photographer yelled as he surveyed the image before him — Sidney Poitier in the center, Spike Lee to his right, Tyler Perry to his left and more than two dozen other black men in Hollywood, from Blair Underwood to Omar Epps, huddled tight around the legend, posing with a purpose.

"We made it!" shouted out one participant as the men broke out into knowing laughter.

It was a night of many emotions as Essence magazine, known for celebrating black women, held its first ceremony honoring the achievements of African-American men in Hollywood in the days leading up to Sunday's Oscar ceremony. Poitier gave a moving tribute to the future and the past, Lee delivered a strong rebuke to what he called Hollywood's exclusionary policies and Perry — who owns his own studio — implored blacks to break out on their own instead of waiting for an open door from the industry.

"If they close the door then break a hole in the freaking window," said Perry to applause. "Find another way ... there is more than one path."

The Wednesday event, held at Perry's tony mansion, was conceived to mark what has been a stellar year for black filmmakers in

cinema, and the black men behind those achievements: Malcolm Lee directed the box-office hit "The Best Man," Steve McQueen's "12 Years a Slave" is up for nine Academy Awards and Forest Whitaker executive produced the acclaimed "Fruitvale

stage by Perry and received a standing ovation, thanked the intimate gathering of celebrities and industry insiders that included Jill Scott, Tiki Sumpter, Tracee Ellis Ross, Shemar Moore, John Singleton, David Oyelowo and more.



**This Feb. 26, 2014 photo released by shows, from left, Spike Lee, Sidney Poitier, Tyler Perry and Malcolm Lee at a ceremony by Essence magazine honoring the achievements of African-American men in Hollywood, in Beverly Hills, Calif.**

**Associated Press**

Station" and starred in the box-office smash "The Butler." All were lauded for their success at "Black Men in Hollywood" dinner, which singled out Spike Lee, Malcolm Lee (who is Spike's cousin), Perry and Poitier, who received the legend award.

Poitier, who was helped to the

"I never in my life had such a warm reception," said the actor, the first black man to win an Academy Award for best actor. He noted the achievements of today's crop of Hollywood stars, he recalled "a time when we gathered in a basement church" and cited black actors genera-

tions ago who did not get the same opportunities as those today, mentioning stars ranging from Paul Robeson to Bill "Bojangles" Robinson to Ethel Waters and Dorothy Dandridge.

"We owe them so much more than we can pay," said Poitier.

Spike Lee noted the achievements black filmmakers had enjoyed in 2013 but recalled a similar burst of success a decade ago and seeing it dwindle: "It can't be another 10-year drought."

He also cautioned about being too celebratory, declaring that blacks still were not among those at Hollywood studios who could green-light a film being made: "There's a long fight that still has to happen."

But Perry, who rose to success with his own brand of films that he self-financed, said blacks had to stop relying on whites in Hollywood to get their dreams made.

"Spike is right about nobody's in the room," Perry said. "But I never believed in being in the room. I believed in owning the room."

He added that he and Lee would continue to have a "healthy debate" about the subject, to which Lee shouted out to laughter: "It's your house!"

The event, which included dinner and a performance by singer Ledisi, was the prelude to Essence's annual brunch honoring black women on Thursday. □



**Disney CEO Bob Iger, left, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, center, and Chief Creative Officer for Marvel Joe Quesada pose for a picture during a news conference in New York, Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2014. The men announced the scheduled filming of a TV series based on Marvel characters in New York State.**

**Associated Press**

**DEEPTI HAJELA**

**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — New

York will become home to the "flawed heroes of Hell's Kitchen," as four

## New Marvel live-action series to film in NY

of Marvel's characters will come to life in a live-action series that will be filmed principally in the state and streamed on Netflix.

The announcement was made Wednesday by Gov. Andrew Cuomo, The Walt Disney Co., Marvel and Netflix Inc. The project, scheduled to start filming in the summer, will feature the characters Daredevil, Jessica Jones, Luke Cage and Iron Fist.

It's the largest film or television production project commitment in New York's history and is expected to bring up to 400 full-time jobs, Cuomo said.

"The Defenders are classic New York characters;

smart, resourceful and tough enough to always stand up for what's right," said Ted Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer. "We're delighted they're coming to life on their home turf thanks to Gov. Cuomo and his team."

Marvel and Netflix had announced a deal in November for the programming, which is slated to take the form of four series — each with 13 one-hour episodes — and a miniseries. They're slated to start streaming next year.

No details were available about how long the productions would last or what the story lines would look like. Daredevil is first up, followed by the others.

In the Marvel world, Daredevil is the superhero identity of Matt Murdock, who is blind but whose other senses are extra-human. Jessica Jones is a former superhero now working as a private detective. Luke Cage was wrongly imprisoned and gained his powers unexpectedly in an experiment. Iron Fist is the superhero identity of Daniel Rand, who has amazing martial arts abilities.

In making the announcement, Cuomo offered up his own very personal idea for a new superhero. "I can see it: boy from Queens goes to Albany to fight the evil empire and bring justice to the people of the state," he said. □



# The State of Arizona



GAIL COLLINS

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Arizona. Wow. How often do you find yourself saying, "Go, entrenched interests of the business community!" Yet here we are.

Responding to howls from the state's economic interests, Gov. Jan Brewer vetoed a bill that would have allowed businesses to discriminate against gay people on the grounds of religious conviction. Brewer is an erratic politician, but she's not crazy. After all, she did once refer to the state Capitol as "that hellhole."

It would have been hard to ignore the pressure. American Airlines and Apple said the bill was a terrible idea. So did the Arizona Chamber of Commerce. The list went on and on. "The entire business community is galvanized in a way that I've never seen against this legislation," said Sen. John McCain.

Several of the state senators who had voted for the bill, including one of the co-sponsors, were so terrified that they begged Brewer to use her veto pen to save them from themselves.

What do you think this whole scene means? True, Arizona is a rather strange state. But you don't generally see a Legislature go out of its way to tick off its own moneyed power structure. And you hardly ever see a business establishment howling this loud about something that doesn't involve tax hikes.

This has been building up for a long time. The old order in Arizona has been fuming because it's been elbowed out of political control by people who are less interested in economic development than arresting illegal immigrants, exposing Barack Obama as a Kenyan and combating the scourge of same-sex marriage.

"I remember having a meeting with some folks I'd call country-club Republicans and listening to them bemoan the fact that they have no more influence because of the Clean Elections law," said Rodolfo Espino, a professor at Arizona State University.

We will come to a screeching halt here and re-examine that thought.

Yes! Part of the super-weirdness of Arizona politics appears to be the result of the state's 1998 public financing law, which provided tons of matching funds to unwealthy-but-energetic candidates from the social right at the expense of the pragmatic upper class. The Supreme Court took the teeth out

of the law in 2011, but, by then, the traditional Republican elite had lost its place at the head of the political table.

I know, I know. Many of us would like to empower the grass-roots with public campaign financing. Don't give up. Just remember to make sure that the roots in your neighborhood have a more expansive vision than the ones that popped up in the Grand Canyon State.

Meanwhile, the business community has both practicality and righteousness on its side. The bill really is bad for business. Plus, it's narrow and mean. It was written in response to incidents in New Mexico and Colorado in which gay couples successfully sued commercial establishments whose owners refused to take their wedding photographs or make them a wedding cake.

Fear of being forced to bake for homosexuals is apparently so deep-seated that the Arizona lawmakers were able to ignore the fact that, unlike New Mexico and Colorado, their state has no law barring discrimination against gays in public accommodations. It's already possible for a business to refuse to even sell them a Valentine.

"Can you give me a specific example of someone in Arizona who's been forced to do something against their religious belief, or (was) successfully sued because of their faith?" Anderson Cooper asked state Sen. Al Melvin.

"Again, I think if anything, you - this bill is pre-emptive to protect priests," said Melvin.

This was on CNN, and I really recommend watching it as a gold-standard example of the perils of putting state senators on national television. At one point, Cooper asked whether, under the proposed law, a bank officer could refuse to lend money to a divorced woman because of religious convictions about the sanctity of marriage.

"I don't know of anybody in Arizona that would discriminate against a fellow human being ... no Christian or no Jew that I know of," said Melvin.

Have I mentioned that he is running for governor?

And Arizona businesses aren't the only ones recoiling from the scene. This week Delta, which is headquartered in Atlanta, urged rejection of both the Arizona bill and another religious-rights measure that's pending in the Georgia Legislature. The Georgia bill's sponsor acknowledged the Arizona backlash would probably kill its chances anytime soon. Meanwhile, in Ohio, sponsors of a right-to-refuse bill announced they were pulling the plug.

Maybe we have reached a critical historical juncture. Struggles for human rights always begin with brave men and women who stand up, isolated, against the forces of oppression. But, in the United States, victory really arrives on the glorious day when the people with money decide discrimination is bad for business. Thanks, Arizona. □



## 'The Wild West of Privacy'



JOE NOCERA

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We are fast approaching a privacy crisis in the United States. Google, Facebook and other big Internet companies collect information about us, which they deploy in the service of advertisers. Big data brokers, like Acxiom, have developed sophisticated tools that allow them to know almost as much about us as we know about ourselves; they then sell that data to all kinds of companies that want to learn everything from our habits to our health, from our sexual orientation to our finances.

The digital age has made it easy to collect medical data, which is supposed to be protected under federal law. Huge data breaches at big retailers like Target have made it seem unsafe to use credit cards. And I haven't even mentioned the Edward Snowden revelations about the massive data collection by the National Security Agency.

"The United States," says Barry Steinhardt, the founder of Friends of Privacy USA, "is basically the Wild West of privacy."

As The Times noted in an editorial on Monday, it was two years ago that the Obama administration issued a report calling for a consumer privacy bill of rights. Although the report went nowhere, it was full of sound, broad prin-

ciples: "a sensible framework that would help establish fairness and accountability for the collection and use of personal information," as a group of privacy advocates put it in a letter they sent to the president Monday.

The advocates called on President Barack Obama to work with Congress to finally pass privacy legislation.

In that spirit, I thought it would be a useful exercise to call some privacy experts and ask them what should be in such a bill. Here's what they had to say.

**Regulate Data Brokers**

Almost everyone I spoke to saw data brokers as a far bigger threat to privacy than, say, Facebook. These are companies that collect a hundred different data points, both offline and online, and create scores and profiles that they sell to anyone who wants to buy them.

At a minimum, people should know what information of theirs is being compiled. Better yet, people should have a right to control what information of theirs gets sold and what remains private.

**Opt-In Instead of Opt-Out**

The typical terms of agreement that we check when we want to use the services of an Internet company invariably gives the company the right to redeploy our information for their own benefit. Some companies also give consumers the right to opt-out of that information-gathering, but it is usually a process that requires some effort.

A far better approach would have customers opting in instead of opting out. This would also likely force companies to explain to their customers why they need the data and what they will use it for, which is another thing that should be included in any privacy bill.

**Give Companies an Incentive to Prevent Data Breaches**

One reason breaches like the recent Target disaster have taken place is that they bring with them very little consequence. But it

would be easy enough to create consequences - a data breach could be treated like an oil spill, with fines attached.

The government could also make it easier for people to sue. Lee Tien of the Electronic Frontier Foundation also says that companies should be doing far more encrypting than they do now. Privacy legislation could give them a push in that direction.

**No More Secrets**

It's not just data brokers that need to be more transparent. It is every entity that collects data. People should be able to see the information that is collected on them. For instance, there are companies that compile scores about people - risk scores, or health scores, or fraud scores.

Those scores should be known to the people who are being scored because it can affect everything from their ability to get insurance to their chances of landing a job. "You should have the right to know what information is being collected about you, who has access to it, how it is being used, and to limit that use," says Marc Rotenberg of the Electronic Privacy Information Center.

"And if companies violate those rights, there should be consequences."

In 1967, Sen. William Proxmire, who would later serve as the head of the Senate Banking Committee, pushed through the Truth in Lending Act in the face of fierce opposition from the credit card industry. It was, however, the best thing that ever happened to the industry because it showed consumers, for the first time, that it could protect them from fraud or shady practices.

In some ways, it is the same now with privacy.

As much as the companies like Google and Facebook and Acxiom would oppose privacy legislation, they need it - for their sake as well as ours.

Sometimes, government has to save business from itself. □



# California Endangered Species: Plastic Bags

IAN LOVETT

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**LOS ANGELES** - On a recent drizzly day, Esha Moya found herself standing outside a grocery store in South Los Angeles, her half-dozen paper bags falling apart in the rain, wishing she had a few small items that had been free and plentiful her entire life but are now banned in this city: plastic shopping bags.

"I hate this," said Moya, a telemarketer and a mother of two. She has begun stockpiling plastic bags at home because paper bags "are always breaking," she said. "It's stupid,

at the start of this year became the largest city in the country to enforce such a ban. Paper bags, which are biodegradable and easier to recycle, are often available for a small fee.

And now, lawmakers in Sacramento are trying to make California the first state to approve a blanket ban on this most ubiquitous of consumer products.

"It has become increasingly clear to the public the environmental damage that single-use plastic bags have reaped," said Alex Padilla, a state senator who is sponsoring legislation for a statewide ban. "This is the

The case against plastic shopping bags is simple and, with more than 150 communities across the country embracing some kind of anti-bag laws, increasingly familiar. Plastic bags are used once or twice but can last up to a millennium.

Only a small fraction of the bags are recycled, in large part because they jam sorting machines at recycling plants and so must be separated from other plastics. Many bags end up snagged on trees, stuck in storm drains or sitting in landfills.

In just a few years, local

Many consumers bristle at having to pay for a necessity that has always been free. "We're already struggling," Moya said as she waited in the rain for a taxi with her disintegrating paper bags, purchased for 10 cents each. "Groceries cost enough money. Then I have to pay for bags?"

The plastics industry has worked furiously to tap into that frustration. So far, the industry - behind millions of dollars spent lobbying lawmakers - has managed to beat back efforts to pass statewide bans in California and a handful of other states.

year's bill.

Mark Daniels, a vice president at Hilex Poly, said a ban would cost the state up to 2,000 jobs.

"This is going to cost Californians millions and millions of dollars," Daniels said of the current legislation. "They're going to have to purchase millions of supposedly reusable bags from China."

But support has been steadily growing in the California Legislature. The Los Angeles Times endorsed a statewide ban on Thursday, and several senators who voted against the ban last year have come out in support of it this time.

Some environmentalists say they now believe they have the momentum to push bans across the country, starting with California.

"It's very effective, and it's very cost-effective," said Kerrie Romanow, director of environmental services for San Jose, Calif.

Since San Jose's ban took effect in 2012, plastic-bag litter in storm drains, which can contribute to flooding, has fallen by 89 percent. In unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County, large retail stores reported a drop in the use of paper bags since a similar ban, coupled with a 10-cent fee for paper bags, took effect.

"People are adapting very quickly," Romanow said. "The days of a single candy bar getting its own plastic bag are over."

Abbi Waxman, a television writer in Los Angeles, said she had tried for years to wean herself off plastic bags.

But despite sidelong looks from grocery store cashiers, she seldom remembered to bring her cloth bags.

"Once they started charging me, that was the tipping point when I could actually remember to bring my bags," said Waxman, 43, standing with a half-dozen reusable bags on a recent shopping trip.

"I have, I'm not kidding, about 40 reusable bags at home, because I feel so guilty when I come without them that I buy more each time," she said. □



A sign at Ralph's grocery store reminds shoppers to bring a reusable bag due to the plastic bag ban in Los Angeles, Feb. 26, 2014. A companion to shoppers for a half-century, the plastic bag is now under siege in California, where a growing number of policy makers have come to regard it as a symbol of environmental wastefulness.

(Monica Almeida/The New York Times)

and it makes it really hard for us."

A companion to shoppers for a half-century, the plastic bag is now under siege in California, where a growing number of policymakers have come to regard it as a symbol of environmental wastefulness.

Since 2007, plastic shopping bags have been banned in nearly 100 municipalities in the state, including Los Angeles, which

beginning of the phaseout of single-use plastic bags - period."

Padilla's measure would ban traditional single-use plastic bags at supermarkets, liquor stores and other locations where they have long been standbys. Paper bags and more robust, reusable plastic bags will be available for a 10-cent fee, with the goal of forcing shoppers to remember their canvas bags.

bans on plastic bags have spread from San Francisco to Honolulu to the North Shore of Massachusetts. Washington, D.C., has imposed a 5-cent fee, and New York City has several times considered charging for bags, most recently last year, when the proposal died at the end of the city's legislative session. The new mayor, Bill de Blasio, has expressed support for a ban on plastic bags.

Hilex Poly, one of the nation's largest manufacturers of plastic bags, single-handedly spent more than \$1 million lobbying against a bill to ban plastic bags in California in 2010. That bill failed, as did another attempt in 2013.

Hilex Poly, based in Hartsville, S.C., has made political donations to every Democrat in the California Senate who joined Republicans in voting against last